



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



SONGS AND ROMANCES

BY

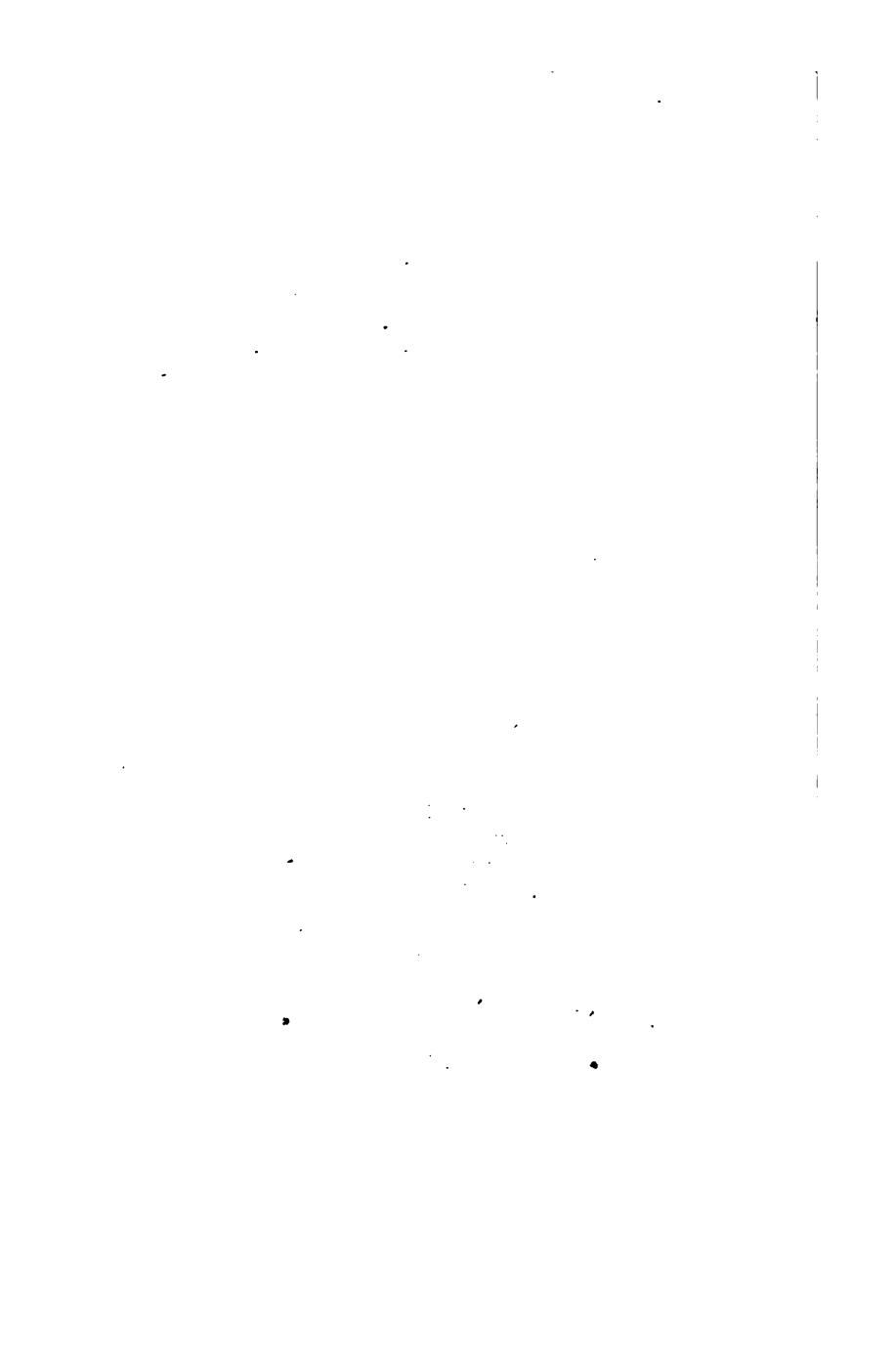
T.C. IRWIN



600084120L



15



SONGS AND ROMANCES,

ETC.

BY

THOMAS CAULFIELD IRWIN.



DUBLIN:

M. H. GILL & SON, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-ST.

1878.

280 - 0 . 262 .

PRINTED BY M. H. GILL & SON, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-STREET, DUBLIN.

Dedication.

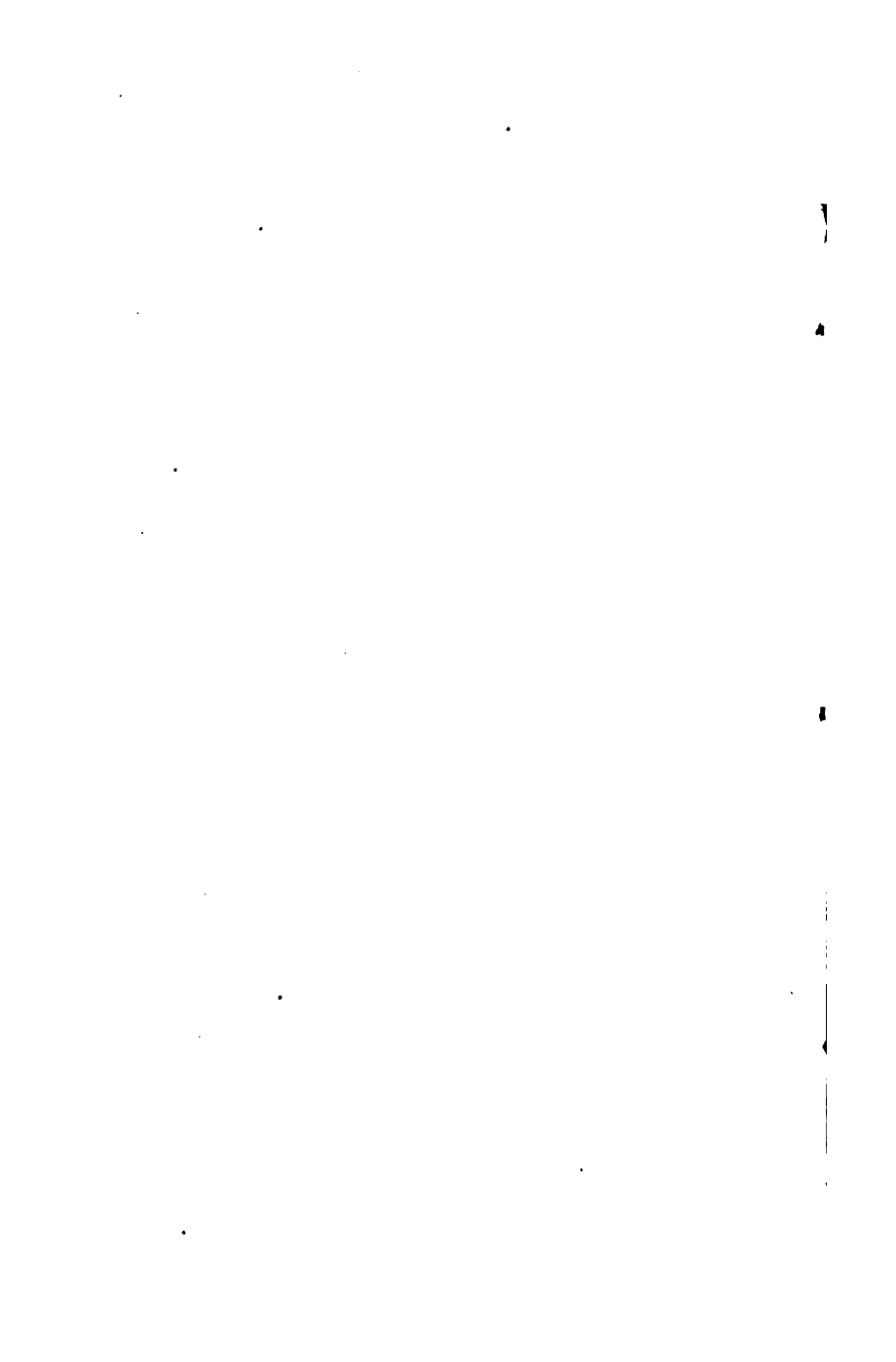
PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

**Mr. Irwin's Poetical Writings will
appear, from time to time, in volumes
similar to the present.**

BY M. H. GILL & SON, 50 UPPER SACKVILLE-STREET, DUBLIN.

Dedication.

To the Memory
Of my dear little Son,
Those few moods of mind, artistic and
natural, which I once hoped might
have amused him
are
Dedicated.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
My Garden by the Sea	9
With the Waves	11
Song. Autumn	12
Song. Summer in our brain and blood	13
The Two Bouquetieres	14
Song. In all your wanderings	17
Song. Alone in loveless life	18
Song. The more of beauty we	19
Song. Since the sunless western brine	20
Song. Through the shadows of the window vine	21
A late Autumn evening	23
Effe. A little Legend	25
Artist's Song	43
Harvest Twilight	49
A Child's dream	51
A gray day by the Sea	59
The Ghost's Promenade	60
The Wager: a revel scene of Pagan Rome	63

	PAGE
The fate of Athos	78
The Spanish Diligence	84
Song. My dreams were doleful and drear	87
Window and Hearth	89
Song. The Skylark soars on sightless wing	93
Sonnet. Ah! Love, first felt when Summer days were bluest	94
Song. The Wave upon the brink of Day	95
Song. "When do I think of thee?"	96
Sunset Song	98
Sonnet. With the moon alone in Summer night	99
With the dawn	100
An Infant's earliest recollections	101
A Sunday scene	103
A May Sunday	104
An Urn	105
Lonely Delights	106
The coming Time	107
Sonnet. In my soul's temple, sacredly enshrined	109
Eumorphia: a sketch of Culture	110
Summer Wanderings	117
A Cluster of Beauties	129
A Group in Queen Anne's time	138
A Visit to a Bride	143
The Suire	153
Minnie	159

CONTENTS.

7

PAGE

Glints of the Year	160
Sonnet. Into the wood at close of rainy Day	163
A Sunset Adieu	164
An Autumn evening	168
Fancies	171
Glimpse of a Battle	174
The Loss of "The Captain"	177
Winter noon in the woods	180
The Herdsman	181
Ducks bathing	185
In a Bohaun	187
The blind old Woman	190
A vision of Erie	192
Manon	197
Summer evening	213
Song. Midsummer once, and Alice was here	214
A Skeleton Chaperon	216
Estaia—From an unpublished Drama	227
A Greek Song	232
Winter Day Dream of a Student	234
Pan	238
The Mariner's Home	241
July rain	246
What a Faery sees	247
Poet and Sage	249
Song. Some through sunny life are moving	250

	PAGE
Arabs of Time	252
Mosses and Grasses	256
Old Lyrists	268
Twilight	275
Old Count Ugenstein	275
Le Tour de Halle—Bruges	287
Morning on the Adriatic	291
Evening in the Pyrenees	292
Song. A Greek Dawn	293
Song. Sorrento Twilight	294
Floating	295
Every Day	297
Two Kisses	297
Song. Let us unite the three most bright	299

SONGS AND ROMANCES,

ETC.

SUMMER SONGS OF SEA AND SHORE.

My Garden by the Sea.

I.

THERE is a garden by a sea,
Tranquil as eternity,
Where oft I breathe in happy dreams,
'Mid bowers so thickly roofed with rose,
The spirit, lapped in leaves at noon,
Forgetting earth and all its pain,
Is lulled asleep by falling rain
Or liquid lapse of streams;
Now where one fronts the sunset's glows,
And one, the rising moon.

2

l,

II.

And there's a chamber latticed round
With foliage, where the shady sound
Is heard of bubbling, mossy springs,
In which I rest long summer nights,
Girt by the ambrosial solitude ;
While the doves nestle in sweet air,
Flamed by one earnest star, and where
I wake with stir of golden wings
That round the open casement brood,
And waves, and wavering lights.

III.

Amid its flowers and fadeless trees
Its spacious, splendourous silences,
Its seasonless monotonies
Of sun and moon and ocean shore,
And watery woodland's undertone,
The soul, inspiring mellow breath,
Secluded past domains of death,
Through Beauty's calm immensities,
Delighted, silent, and alone,
Would range for evermore.

With the Waves.

SIDE LONG resting a spray-wetted cheek
On the hard sands of this quiet creek,
I behold in tranced mood the gold
Clouds, magnificent and manifold;
Welcoming the while, winds odour-souled,
Coming from the tropic south beneath,
Warm along the western waters rolled;
And their breath
Mingling with the purple autumn heath:
Now, gazing on the billow, glassy-grey
Mounting o'erhead from the wide sea day,
Curving imperious, tumbling into spray
Ebbing in mournful majesty away;—
Divinely dying like some glorious grief
Of its own poet-passion, rare and brief:
Ceaseless emerald splendours freshly foaming
From the maze of light, and motion coming,
Making music round the lonely coast,
Shedding rainbow colours on the shells,
One retreating as another swells
To be in endless others rising, lost:
While bends the azure, deep ethereal dome
O'er pebbles wet, and bubbles of fresh foam,
Sporting a space with life and death, as we
Upon this bright shore of eternity.

Autumn.

SONG.

In yon valley's orchard maze
Pleasant autumn lingering stays,
Sunset like, in dreamy haze
Tempering its dry golden blaze.
Thither shall we go, and find
Warm green light and mellow wind;
And in leafy, winding ways
Woodland welcomes many-souled,
Echoes sweet from ages old;
And feast with Plenty all the days
We care for frolic:—for, behold!
Yonder's a fount with lymph like gold;
Ripe grain and ruddy fruit and fair
Are heaped in careless harvest there;
Broad, yellowing trees are dipped in belts
Of fragrant mist that meets and melts,
Far off, and in each vista lets
The level drowsy glory shine,
Under the broad arcades of vine,
On forest floors of violets;
And mossy banks that front the west
For radiant revel or rich rest.

Song.

I.

SUMMER in our brain and blood
Tones us to a mood divine !
We have sailed the bright day long ;
Now for revel, rest and song,
In this hollow of the wood,
Round our sunset bowl of wine !
All that's best of land and sea
Ours has been and ours will be ;
In the worlds of leaves and spray
Beauty is the god whom we
Worship all the happy day ;
And when fades its light away—
Immensity.

II.

Couched beneath the cooling sail,
With our friends the sea and sun,
We have undulated o'er
Yonder deeps from shore to shore,—
Comrades of the southern gale,
From spring of dawn till day is done.

Space and substance everywhere
Yield delights and beauties rare :
Now with nerves vibrating light,
To yon moon through depths of air,
All as happy as we, bright
Would our spirits sail to-night—
If Love were there.

The Two Bouquetières.

I.

APRIL, with a bunch of violets humid,
Plucked from oak-roots, as she came along
The morn-basking meadows by the sea,
Singing to herself a lark-like song,
Down the sunny beach banks tripped to me ;—
A simple shape, with cold, clear cheek which
bloomèd
Like the rose-cloud, and pure forehead, where
A wreath of buds on her young dewy hair
Wavered freshly, as, in frolic mood,
On the wet spray-edged sand she stood

White-footed, her light leaf-green garment blown
Faintly in the sweet, wave-wandering air—
And rising tip-toe, flung into my boat
Her morning nosegay, just as I afloat
Was putting off upon the deep alone;
And then, with a whisper breathed lowly,
Turned, still smiling her nude shoulder o'er,
And glided off along the grassy shore,
Nodding to me; until at the holly
By the road's turn she had vanished wholly,
Leaving me at sea with sunny melancholy.

II.

I had just awakened, and my dream
Yet had scarcely crossed the window gleam,
When, as fresh as foam of the blue seas
When the dawn in red and golden lines
Lengthens, and the last star shrinking shines,
Young May entered, with the warmed breeze,
My old casement, draped with verdant vines;
Blithely glanced around the book-strewn chamber,
Where the mild, leaf-shadowing, slanting glory
Fell upon the hearth-stone's ashy ember,
Chair and table strewn with sketch and story;
And upon the scrolls of ruby-coloured
Wit, and wine-songs of the winter hoary—
Looking skansly, scorned them; whispering, "Dul-
lard!"

When the bee hums through the heath and clover,
For the musing minstrel, for the lover,
Are not roofèd nights of winter over ?
Blossomed bosom'd Summer soon will follow
My warm wandering winds and earliest swallow,
From whose wing a new, fresh-aired feather
Must be plucked, to paint the happy weather
I now bring you from the southern ocean,
With each jocund, jubilant emotion,—
Lengthening days and softer skies,
Leaves and lights, and harmonies
With them waft, to reinspire
Hearts with love and brains with fire.
Are not love and summer, one,
Poet? Then be love your theme.
Quit the hearth-nook for the sun,
And in his glory paint each dream
Which the sweet sea-wind will breathe you :—
Meanwhile, with this rose I'll wreath you,
Tinctured in the dawn divine ;
And, till winter comes, shall bury
In this tankard old, your merry
Sheaf of hearth-songs, red with wine."

Song.

I.

In all your wanderings
Saw you ere, mariner,
Such a bright boat as mine?
Say what you think of her?
Hark! how her cordage sings
To the seas' murmurings;
All her sail, lily white,
 wooing the airy night,
On to those moonlit isles,
Which are but maidens' smiles,
Or, cups of wine.

II.

Freighted with songs is she,
Each a rose blossom; culled
From the same bough as this,
Thornless and choicely culled;
And her ship's company,
But this gold lyre you see;
While not a leaf the moon
Lights, but we'll barter soon
For a sigh sweet as those
Breathed from each poem-rose,
Or for a kiss.

Song.

I.

ALONE in loveless life,
Year follows year,
Like tear after tear;
Cold, calm, until each break
Or wastes upon the cheek;
Yet something, 'mid the strife,
The heart must still hold dear,
Breathing or senseless things,
A bird or book that sings,—
Spots where the dead have been—
Meadow and hillock green,
The woods and sunset shore:
Each scene that round us brings
The days—no more!

II.

As life flows to its fall,
I seek in quietness
The truest happiness.
Still beauty is to me
Old Nature's deity,
Which harmonises all.

Sweet fancies I caress,
Like children born of light
At dawn and starry night.
My friends are dark and day,
The time of seed and sheaves,
Of winds and withered leaves,
As toward the Infinite
Wends my lone way.

Song.

I.

THE more of Beauty we
Can fancy, feel, and see,
The more the soul becomes a harmony,
Whose magic finds a grace
In every scene and place—
An echo from each orb in shoreless space :
Synthetic sympathies
With earth, and air, and seas,
And Love uniting all life's destinies.

II.

Come, divine poet tome,
Under the sycamore dome
This silent day we'll make our summer home :

And while the ocean, through
Thick blossoms, cool and blue,
Glimmers—yield up the sense and soul unto
Each melody that flows,
Each fancy fresh that blows—
Like a full-bosomed wave or full-blown rose.

Song.

I.

SINCE the sunless western brine
Seemed a sea of purple wine,
Half a summer night has flown ;
While beneath this full-leaved tree,
Breathing blossom'd sycamore balm,
From the grassy garden, we
Saw each star go down alone ;
And the crescent pure and pale,
Like a lily leaf o'er blown,
Sink beside one shining sail
In the calm.

II.

Shall we rise and wander home ?
Or, still lingering, hear the foam,

Softly sighing, roll below
On the sands, and at the feet
Of yon myrtle-crowned steep;
Every shining second's beat
Syllabing with pulse of snow?
Nay, still sweeter than so part,
Let those last faint stars which know
Of our love, thus heart by heart
Yield us sleep.

Song.

I.

THROUGH the shadows of the window vine
Comes a glimmer of the wave on our wine:
The moon rises fair,
And a widely wandering air
Rustles warmly through the boughs
By the ivy-walled house,
In the dusky orchard there;
And we hear, as it heaves,

Multitudinous the murmur of the weather-wintered
leaves,
Many-mingled, as the ripples of the sere shining
brine;
And in the silent, mellow intervals,
The wave on the sands, and the apple that
falls.

II.

Like life is the season and the place,
Full of shadowy beauty and of grace :
Joyous fancies in a glow
Finely fire the sweet blood's flow ;
Memory luminously rounds
Through the stillness, and the sounds
From the night are not of woe,
While they waft to the ears
Affectionate faint voices from the old completed years,
And scents of happy harvests gathered for a bright-
ening race ;
Some ripened thought bequeathed by the
brain,
Some music rounding from the infinite
main.

A Late Autumn Evening.

I.

GRAY swallows wheel along the river,
Winding slow and silent ever,
Past the clumps of barren bushes,
Past the marge of waving rushes ;
And a thrush sings loneliness
From a tree,
In a meadow far away,
Where sparks low down o'er woodlands brown
The pale gold star of dying day.
Hither and thither wheel gray swallows,
O'er the sandy banks and hollows ;
Bird, from the tree sing mellowly
The daylight down the cloudy sea !

II.

As at the garden gate, when mute
Are all the meadows, I salute
The white moon in the rainy east,
And every other sound has ceased,
From casement where the roses share
Her whispers sweet,

I hear a voice, that wings its way
Through drooping boughs and blossoms, say—
“Come in; the rainy night grows drear,
While the hearth here is burning clear;
And I’ve a book in which we’ll follow
Summerward south the sailing swallow.”



ROMANCES.

Effie.

A LITTLE LEGEND.

I.

LATE autumn o'er a land, solemn and green,
Had come with constant cloud and windy days :
The parched leaves drifted from the trees grown lean,
And wider frothed the foam round rocky bays ;
The dawns were mournful more than they had been,
And ghastly glared the sunsets through the haze,
Lighting the piteous plain with fitful sheen,
As on the eve, when, blown by the gray gale,
We see the first dim figure of our Tale :

II.

An aged man, doubled with weight of years,
More than the faggot-load his shoulders bore,
Who, in the last dim island light appears,
Footing the sandy ridges by the shore,

Where the chill, bitter blasts have blown the tears
They started, on his cheek, withered and froze ;
Strange voices in the wind filling his ears ;
As, pausing in a memoried muse, he stands
Looking on the bleak sea and bleaker lands.

III.

Through level solitudes the river showed
A slow and shining course, until its trace
Was lost in lonely distance, without road,
Toward the low, sloping hills—a young blue race
Of others mightier beyond, that glowed
In sunset, giant-like ; along whose base,
Southward, the austere ocean coldly flowed
Up to a many-masted harbour, and
An aged, citadelled palace, gray and grand.

IV.

A dreary glimmer from 'he sun gone down
Still edged the ashy cloud-bank, and across
The inland, desolate in twilight brown,
Brooded the wildering gusts, o'er tracts of moss
And rush ; and o'er the ruined castle's crown
Upon the height, with battlement and foss,
Darkening above the waste with spectral frown.
And the last crows flew low along the shore,
As, wearied, stopp'd he at his cottage door.

V.

This leafy hermitage nestled by a wood,
Laced with old ivy, clinging hard around
The narrow porch : in winter's cold, a hood,
A shade in summer ; whence was heard the sound
Of rivulets wogling in their listless mood
Of clear spring mornings ; or the ceaseless bound
Of billows, when the autumn west, like blood,
Glared on the heathy headland ; and below,
Their long strand wash through nights of rain
and snow.

VI.

The wind, that rose with darkness, moaning loud,
Had dumb'd the sound of his approaching feet ;
So, when he raised the latch and entered bowed,
Surprised with joy a maiden rose to greet
His coming : tall she was, with gesture proud,
Yet, like her face of beauty, simple sweet,
As some moon-lighted, snowy April cloud,
Just touched with dawn ;—who, fondling his old
head,
Seated him, pleased, before the hearth-nook red.

VII.

And as he of his simple meal partook,
Sate gossiping her fancies, quaint and new :
How, as she watched from lonely window nook,
A bird sang little songs, like drops of dew,

Clear and consoling ; how with awe she shook
As, close athwart the ivies, blackly flew,
Flapping with rancid squawk, the twilight rook ;
And how she prayed for his returning soon,
Hearing the wind, knowing there was no moon.

VIII.

"In sooth, the eve is wild and cheerless," said
The Woodman, her soft face upon his knee
Fond pillowing, "and such sunsets, drear and red,
Bring back a many memories to me,
Both sad and sweet : sometimes I deem the dead
Flit in their shadows ; but just now the sea,
Ruddily lined along its space of lead,
And surged along the rocks, recalled once more,
Poor child, the hour I saved you on that shore.

IX.

"Yes, it was when the great storm rolled away,
Which held me prisoner for three days, that I
Went down along the beach, at set of day,
Searching for shell-fish ; when, low in the sky,
I saw a mighty barque against the gray
Clouds, plunge with broken masts despairingly,
While nearer, in an inlet of the bay,
Something upon a plank came floating nigh,
Which with much wonder, wading, soon I found
To be a cradled infant, safe and sound.

X.

" Yourself, my Effie, gazing with wide eyes,
Without a cry, or look of fear upon
The flying crimsons of the changing skies,
Lit up from the last glory of the sun :
Who can foresee the marvellous destinies
Blind fortune weaves about us, surely none ;
And thus from the waste waves I snatched the
prize
Which you to me have proved, my darling one ;
Who I've reared up for thirteen happy years,
Each one of which, future and past endears.

XI.

" For ere you came, in this sad wilderness,
The changing seasons were almost alone
My comrades ; and as life grew less and less,
Your youth, my child, restored my morning
gone,
And made my years flow on in happiness,
They knew not ere your face before me shone ;
Ah, me ! joy has its night too ; while I bless
The chance which won you—ne'erless, when I'm
gone,
I think perplexed, what may of you become,
Left lonely here, when this old voice is dumb. .

XII.

" You know not, pretty one, whom you may be ;
Perchance of noble lineage you are ;
As I in dreams am whispered wondrously,
When shines upon my rest the southern star ;
The ship was mighty which across the sea
Wafted you—but, it sunk beyond the bar ;
Full pleased to-morrow would I die, if we
Could find some track, somewhere upon the earth,
By which to trace the secret of your birth.

XIII.

" What think you, Effie, if some time we seek
Sorga, the witch, though far away she dwells
Beyond the northern woods, and let her speak
The secret she may pierce by sov'reign spells ?
I saw her when a child, a woman weak
And aged, with accents like vague sound of bells,
Or uncongealing ice, just ere it break ;
And know her spiritual power is great,
And that she communes with the powers of
Fate."

XIV.

Thus prattled the old Woodman in the glow
Of his poor hearth ; and Effie, stirred with fear
And hope the secret of her birth to know,
Kneeling, her glad hands clapping by his ear, .

Kissed him, and said: "Oh, grandsire, let me go
Soon as the wintry season passes here,
And melts upon the lower hills the snow"—
Then paused, so swift the deafening storm had
come
That even the chimney crickets ceased their hum.

XV.

Then, as with wildered hair and garments blown,
He peered into the storm before he barred
The door against the wild night, black and lone—
Lo! down the blank, low heavens, sparsely starred,
A fiery meteor, flashing, launched prone—
Like some great angel who with hell had warred—
Above the unseen woodland's anguished moan—
Athwart the foaming seas in swollen swoon
Of tempest, raging o'er the unrisen moon.

XVI.

But months rolled by; and 'twas midwinter when
One white, still morn, a sudden impulse stirred
Effie, to seek alone the witch's den;
And, earnest as some springward, wandering bird,
She sped, quick breathing, over moor and fen,
By solitary distance undeterred,
All day: 'till, with the evening, a white glen
Spaced cold before her, at whose close she felt
Opened the woody cave, where Sorga dwelt.

XVII.

Low and remote the wistful winter air
 Blew from the streaks of sunset ; and soon fell
The leaden twilight on the place, all bare
 And drear with snow, whose whirling flakes, pell-
 mell,
Careered in wild, glad dances, cold and fair ;
 And in the gale now blowing, pitiable
The barren woodlands moaned their bleak despair ;
 While o'er her path each huge, strong-rooted tree
 Strained like a vessel in some storm-swung sea.

XVIII.

Thus, faintly, through the gusting, sleety flaw,
 Desolate advanced she down the darkened vale,
Dreading the wolves' rush, and the plashy paw
 And fierce fang on her uncloaked shoulder pale,
By thickets dense ; until at length she saw,
 Just as her weary feet began to fail,
A red light, which, still distant, roused her awe ;
 Yet, swifter toward it sped she, self-sustained
 Until her journey's fearful bourne was gained.

XIX.

There seated, in the centre of the cave,
 Appeared a wondrous Presence, aged and wise,
Last of a race, long gathered to the grave,
 Renown'd for gifts of working sorceries :

Shadow-like seemed her form and features, save
Her forehead, underlit by elfin eyes,
Glimmering like the last sad twilight wave ;
Or, as amid a cavern, vague and blind,
Some deep, dusk pool, that never knew a wind.

XX.

The withered branch, culled from the forest floor,
Gleamed like a wintry witch upon the ground,
Flashing its quick, fantastic fancies o'er
The stony wall's impenetrable bound—
Twilighted mirth ;—while through the rocky door
The moon, completed in her lustrous round,
Streamed down the hollow valley hushed and froze,
Wrought mystic figures with the leaves—quaint
fays,
Dumb-spell words, mingling with the mirror'd
blaze.

XXI.

But the dim inward of her dwelling-place,
Vast-vaulted, was more shadowy and grand,
With sculptures huge, some rude, primeval race,
Half bestial, had wrought, what time the land
Yielded them provender ; with heavy hand,
Proud and delighting in the gift to trace,
By imitation, no brute could command—
Tall blockish effiges of idol gray,
And forms of savage hunters passed away.

XXII.

The witch stirred not, but, gazing on the maid,
Asked of her mission ; and, being told, arose,
Sudden and awesome :—"Be you not afraid."

Then, in the swift arm's shadowing which froze
Her rosy pulses, on her brow was laid
A finger, to whose icy touch repose
A moment held her statue still, and stayed
Her consciousness into oblivion cold,
As though her virgin requiem had rolled.

XXIII.

Then Sorga's voice awoke her. "What you will
A vision shall reveal : then, as the night
Which follows it grows dusk, upon the hill
Whereon the Castle stands will gleam a light
Beckoning ; thither proceed, and wait until
I come ; your destiny will thence be bright,
And known your birth, as yet inscrutable :
Enough ; return ; a star will guide your feet ;
Now, as the snows, be silent, 'till we meet."

XXIV.

And silently sustained as by a spell,
Blithe in the light of fancy's future glow,
All night she traced her path by wood and fell,
In the deep stillness of the stars and snow :

Less weary than by daylight, strange to tell.

Long had the gusting tempest ceased to blow,
And each cold scene seemed whispering, all was well,
Until she raised the latch, and, with soft tread,
Passed by the sleeping Woodman's dawn-lit bed.

XXV.

Much marvelled he when waked where she had been,
And more, to find her wordless; but he guessed
One only purpose could have drawn yestreen
His bird so long from her deserted nest;
Her brow, he thought, shone with a wondrous sheen
Since she had gone upon her mystic quest,
And that about the place she moved, a queen;
Yet of this said he naught, but only told
Fancies he'd shaped in last lone sunset's gold.

XXVI.

Long 'mid the dove-meek thoughts of maidenhood
The witch's words of raven mystery
In ebon expectation seemed to brood,
Waiting some signal to arise and fly,
Scenting far off some unknown precious food
Akin to both: yet winter from the sky
Had passed with all its floods and tempests rude;
And night by night she waited for the dream,
Which broke upon her but with spring's first
beam.

XXVII.

Next day, beneath the porch's ivied hood,
Scarce rustling to the March air's arid sigh,
Sate Effie, wrapped in rich, dream-marvelling mood,
Fearful, yet eager for the day to die.
As o'er bare distances of damp, blue wood
Faint sunlights fell, sadness, she knew not why,
Seemed o'er the well-known scene to spread and
brood;
Why had the hut and garden grown so dear
And dim, as though seen through a parting
tear?

XXVIII.

The robin in the copse had ceased to sing,
And, like the distance, all around seemed dead;
Where, in the stillness of the cloudy spring,
The gray, sun-pencill'd hills that southward spread,
Blent with the sky; through which some sightless
wing
Aloft was heard to pass, scarce marked 'till
fled:
Northward, the shores stretched their dim semi-
ring:
Then, after leagues of sea, sombre in hue,
A promontory, naked in the blue.

XXIX.

Anon, upon the castle's landward side,
A sunbeam floating o'er the broad, green bank,
Into the shatter'd gate was seen to glide,
And beckon, as it passed the turret's flank :
Now in some broken embrasure to hide,
Now flit in fairy flames, until it sank
Beyond the massive, gaunt walls to the sea,
With which they blent their gray monotony.

XXX.

Anon, a dry, vague murmur seemed to stir
Within its courts and vaults—she guessed not
where—
A dim, dead, swooning, ceaseless, humming burr,
As of a millwheel in the distant glare,
Or hollow thunder, now it seemed to her,
Of ghosts untombing, rising into air—
Confused noise of brand, and bone, and spur,
And sweep of garments, withered long in dust,
Marshalling in a whirlwind, brown with rust.

XXXI.

But, lo! as sad she mused, a Warrior proud,
Horsed, armed, and plumed, rides on alone and slow,
Through mountains solitary as a cloud,
And forest darkness and profound, where flow,

By cliffs and precipices, giant-brow'd,
Foam-whirling cataracts to the vales below,
Sliding through verdant glooms, or rushing proud
Down thundering chasms :—'till o'er ways tor-
rent-worn
Once more he travels in full light of morn.

XXXII.

A mighty man and potent prince was he,
Of southern summer lands, the sov'reign star ;
Renown'd in many a court of chivalry,
And hosted plain heroic, near and far ;
Death's minister, whom Death denied to die
In many a fierce, forlorn column of war,
Closed in by the outnumbering enemy,
Where savage shores are girt with northern pine,
And turban'd turrets guard the eastern brine.

XXXIII.

Up to the gates of aged Ascalon,
Through storms of shining scimetars, he'd led
The van of western battle, and upon
Judæa's starry hills oft made his bed ;
From many a pagan prince of Solyman
His sword, in battle's rush, had sheared the head ;
In iron'd anguish, oft beneath the sun
Of wildernesses waterless, he'd bled,—
Since death had seized the lady whom he wed.

XXXIV.

Upon his brow, shadow'd by warrior dooms,
Frowns a huge helm, wrought with the hide of boars,
And where sidelong his brand of iron looms
An elk horn hangs for sounding battle-roads,
Won from those forests older than earth's tombs,
That skirt the far forlorn northern shores
With stately stems and solitary glooms :
A broad, skin mantle wraps his mailed form,
Huge as the mast that never bent to storm.

XXXV.

Remote, great vapours, based on the sea's marge,
Snow pale and mountainous as the chill ice isles,
That drift with summer from the polar surge,
Had filled the distant day with their cold smiles ;
'Till from behind a bronzed gloom, like a targe,
Flamed on his iron'd back the sun erewhiles ;
And now its level light seemed to enlarge
The forward prospect, in whose seaward glare
Loomed one black barque, dim on the verge of air.

XXXVI.

Up to the castle, tower'd 'mid winds that moan
From the thick twilight of the foamy bay,
This plumed pilgrim, o'er the waste alone,
Spurs his strong steed, whose wearied whinnying
neigh

Tells that near rest for travel shall atone ;
And past the windy porch, 'mid gusts of spray,
Enters the silent court—with torch alight,
And casements gleaming on the silent night.

XXXVII.

Without the desolate portal of the hall
He cast his steed's rein on a balustrade,
And entered : lifeless, old, and grand was all
Around, where phantom glooms and glories played
Upon his fearless form advancing tall
Through the long passage, ending in deep shade ;
At which arrived, a curtain, like a pall,
Raising, he strode into a chamber vast,
Magnificent, but silent as the past.

XXXVIII.

From roof of ebon oak, in unison
With the great walls, a splendrous darkness shines
Along the aureate tapestries, and on
Each dim accoutrement, opulent with signs
Of royalty, from bounteous kingdoms won,
Odorous forests, golden-hearted mines,
And islands close unto the setting sun :
Huge armour o'er each casement, vague in night,
Yielding a sombre gleam, like aged light.

XXXIX.

The great Prince gazed around, but less in fear
Than wonder, for of Death no dread had he,
Or of his hosts: then cried aloud:—"Appear
Ghost-guardian of this castle by the sea,
Whose presence I invoke to audience here;
In hope from thee to learn such destiny
As has befallen Effie, my daughter dear;
Knowing that thou, this region's chief of yore,
Still ministrest unseen along its shore.

XL.

"For late while wandering in the vast of dreams,
Spectral domains of vague infinities,
'Mid whose abysses a stormy splendour gleams
From hollow moons of the dead Destinies—
Dim, endless antres, silvered with their streams,
And rich cloud empires throned o'er sunset seas—
Low thunders rolled remote, as me beseems,
In mystic syllables, announced that I
Should find my lost child under this sad sky."

XLI.

As thus he spake, a sound, aged and lone,
As wearied with the distance which it crossed,
Like some Saturnian ocean's desert moan,
Upon the edge of silence nearly lost

As soon as heard, swelling in deeper tone,
Enchanting, musical, along the coast
Flowed through a portal whence the bright waves
shone :

And by his sudden side a Regal Ghost
Showed in the stillness of the spacious hall
Its venerable brow majestic.

XLII.

“Long have I marked thee Aravan the Brave—
As what thou seekest here, now known to none
Save me, who from the region past the grave
Still view the life that rolls beneath the sun :
So from remotest ocean’s moonlit wave
I come to thee. What circumstance has done
I know, albeit impotent to save
The lives from Death that Destiny decrees :—
Mortal, thy lost love sleeps beneath yon seas.

XLIII.

“For in the storm which swept across the main,
Hovering at sunset o’er their shatter’d barque
Then sinking, saw I her, with face of pain,
Placing her infant in its cradl’d ark,
Yield it unto the rolling waves and rain,
Then driving to the shore ; and until dark
Blinded her, anguished, watch if it should gain
The beach. At midnight death came unaware
To one distract ’twixt love’s hope and despair.

XLIV.

“Under the surge the ship sank fathoms deep
With all its lives save one : and oft I view’d
The bones of that lost mother in white sleep,
Cabin’d beneath the waters clear and blue,
Where through a chink in the huge timbers peep
Sunbeam and moonbeam, amid shells a few :
What was to be has been : so, mortal, weep
No more for vanished loss, when Love, in lieu,
Saves for thy sinking years a love as true.

XLV.

“Approach!”—The Spectre ceased, with finger pale
Pointing unto the open door between
The chamber and the hall, where, like a sail
White, distant, dim, by a dark cloud was seen
A maiden, who advanced with a low wail,
As though memorial of what had been ;
And soon clasped to the warrior’s breasted mail
Wept, murmuring and trembling the while
Kissing, he viewed her with paternal smile.

XLVI.

“Dear daughter, image of thy mother dead ;
Restored by fate to cheer my coming age,
To bring me once again the years long fled ;
My principedom and my heart’s sole heritage,

Yet shall I live, my child, to see thee wed :—

But kneel with me to this great Spectre Mage

Ere we depart, for by the morning's red

A ship will waft us home."—But, as upon

The floor they sank—sudden, the scene was gone !

XLVII.

And through the ruined Castle's chamber'd gloom,

Now roofless to the keen stars and the breeze

Of grassy battlements, from room to room

Bearing her to the porch, he leaped with ease

Upon his steed, nestling her cheek of bloom

Under his mantle—as toward the wide seas

They galloped under midnight's cloudy womb

Through rain-drifts and tame lightning, to a cove

Rock-shielded, where a barque at anchor hove.

XLVIII.

So close with the flat rock the wet deck jarred,

He stayed not his good steed, which forward flung

With curving spring, from the cliff black and hard,

Embarqued them desperately the crew among ;

And soon with broad sail bellying from the yard,

Swiftly the eager vessel sidelong swung

By headlands to the white bay, stormy starred.

Thus in the fire-lit cabin, sire and child

Swept to their southern home through waters
wild.

XLIX.

Oh! happy barque, to waft them thus restored;
Oh! hours of strange affectionate commune,
When in his heart sweet love replaced the chord
Long snapped, and silent to its sacred tune;
When, like a day whose dawn was hidden, poured
Through clearing clouds, the rich delight of noon,
By her first known, as by her sire, since lowered
That dark day when his lady voyaged forth
To visit her old home in the gray north.

I.

And now the vessel entered a wide bay,
Upon whose breezy promonts, bleak and high,
In mossy mounds the bones of heroes lay,
With blanch'd feet pointed to the east; and by
A moon low lustering through severed gray,
A rock-piled Palace, dark against the sky,
Whose fire-lit hall reddened the rolling spray,
Blazing with banquet through the midnight cold
O'er vaulted treasures of ransom gold.

II.

And 'mid its chambers soon great welcome rung,
From vassal, friend, and guest, in festival
Rich garniture arrayed; and as among
The wondering circle, by her father tall,

The maiden stood, and at the huge hearth sung
The minstrels—fairest, noblest, amid all
That company, the Princess' kinsman, young
Emiren approached her little hand to kiss,
With swift love smitten, like herself, we wiss.

LII.

And for that night, and many more as bright,
Rejoiced the court with wassail, song, and dance;
And chieftains came to homage the sweet light
Of Effie's princely smiles, and break a lance
Or sword for such reward, as well they might;
And still the more her pleasures to enhance,
Her sire despatched a barque of swiftest flight
To bear her dear old Woodman from his lone
Hut, to his foster-daughter's home and throne.

LIII.

Ere a year rolled, the Princess had been wed,
And by her happy lover's side at dawn
Bent o'er their babe, as 'mid the seaward red
He slept in turret chamber o'er the lawn;
And years rolled on, the while the Warrior's tread
Grew feebler, and his dark eyes dimmer shone;
Yet counted not these years among the dead
Even the old Woodman; and as they grew less
To all, they but enlarged their happiness.

* * * * *

Such is the tale the phantom Minstrel sings
Floating in starry darkness on the blast,
As o'er his lyre a shadowy hand he flings,
Recalling ballad memories, fading fast ;
Or now in Fancy's airy picturings,
Aspiring to perfect or to recast
Scenes, in the light its necromancy flings
O'er History's funeral pageant of the Past :—
One line to breathe adieu—it is the last.



Artist's Song.

I.

THE bells of evening toll !
Beneath our casement roll
The waters from the setting sun round as a ruby bowl ;
Blossoms beside us blow,
And light, in richest glow
Bathes all the pictured panels of our festal studio :
Where we have wreathed since noon
Our fancies into tune :—
Now toil being o'er, stream out the wine, as yonder
comes the moon.

II.

'Twixt life and death, alas !
What is there but a glass,
To tell our years, or colour them with pleasures as
they pass !
The clustering droops of vine
Which round our cradles twine,
Will hide our tombs, as they have hidden our sorrows
in their wine ;
Wit is the meteor bright
We follow through the night,
As Beauty is the darling dream that makes the day
divine.

III.

While here above the ground
We breathe, let life abound
With all the glories we can gain from colour, form,
and sound ;
Life bubbling to the brim,
Noon-full in brain and limb,
As we have felt those summer hours, now fading
far and dim :
And now the moon which shone,
Like our good wine is gone,
Break up the night, whose dreams will veil us like
its vapours wan.

Harvest Twilight.

I.

WHILE the red air of the August day
Breathes through the elm wood, rich and tender,
And round the shore the crimson bay
Is dashed with drifts of tremulous splendour ;
While heaped on the stubble the sheaves in clusters
Taking the light of the evening weather,

Stand on the uplands, like spirits of harvest,
Gathered in golden embraces together :
Here let us lie
While the westering sky
Rains through the foliage sunnily,
Lulled in a dream of forest delights,
'Mid falling waters and wavering lights.

II.

Hark ! as the nightingale cloistered nigh
In the odorous gloom of her green domain,
Pours through the rich dusk plaintively
Her dulcet-pulsed ecstatic strain,
One star beats time in the stillness blue :
And a-near a pebbly rivulet purls
'Mid stately hyacinths, drap'd with dew,
With sprouting necks and purple curls—
As here we lie
While the gloaming sky
Shrinks through the foliage timidly,
Lulled in a dream of forest delights,
'Mid falling waters and wavering lights.

III.

Now the harvest carts with wheaten loads
Roll barnward slow through the twilight brown—
Dim figures pace the sun-dry roads
To the low blue line of the spired town :

And the stretching arm of the cool, gray cape,
Gleams keen in the sea moon rising nigh,
And the inky crow lines woodward shape
Their flight through the pale air drowsily—
As still we lie
While the songless sky
Silvers the foliage airily,
Lulled in a dream of forest delights,
'Mid falling waters and wavering lights.

A Child's Dream.

ONE evening when the April air
Was sweet with rain and growing grass,
And budding boughs of apple and pear,
Ianmie and her mother sate
Beside their ivied cottage door,
Watching the distant figures pass
The elm-lined road along a shore,
Whence spaced the tranquil western seas,
Fresh with spring scents and radiancies
Of sunset; while this way and that
Light-blinded still, the whirring bat

Over the sandy hollows flew ;
While on an upland toward the sky
Frost-rosied, browsed the quiet sheep—
The last gold sun-wave turned to blue,
Bluely arose the hamlet smoke,
And all the birds had gone to sleep ;—
Lo ! faint and far as twilight's star
Glimmered, from dusky hedges nigh
The year's first thrush full-throated woke
Its song amid the falling dew—
Olu—lulu—teru—teru—
Olu—teru !

Sudden upon the child's sweet face
A glow of wonder and wild grace
Strange as the light of day returned
Around her fancied forehead burned ;
She dropp'd her mother's hands—her own
With joy she clapp'd and cried, "Hark, hark !
Mother, it is that bird, my friend,
Come back to me from the world's end
With summer's self ; he sings to show
Me, he is here again, although
Already it is almost dark :—
I knew he'd come." "What mean you, dear ?"
Inquired her mother smiling. "Hear,"
The child said, all her face afflush,
"My story of that darling thrush :—

Last season day by day I went
Down to yon copse, where lived alone
The very bird you now hear sing—
I know his voice as 'twere my own—
And listened many an hour attent,
Until at length methought that I
Could understand his warbling.
To him I used to speak whene'er
He paused, and then he would reply—
At least it seemed he did—and we
Thus passed the summer happily,
Singing together; for among
The whispering leaves and lights, I sung
The songs you taught me to him there;
Till with the shadows lengthening,
He nooked his head beneath his wing,
And looking up the sky of blue
Had grown all dim; and then I knew
'Twas time to hasten home to you,
Who wondered why I passed each day
Out in the fields till twilight gray;
When, 'twas because so very dear
Had grown the bird whose song you hear—
I could not tear myself away.

At length the summer pass'd; the trees
Began to drop their leaves and shake
Sadly and chill in yonder brake,

And winds at nightfall blank to rise ;
Gray grew the cloudy, dismal skies,
And dim the wild and desolate seas.

The other birds were going fast,
When on a dusky eve this one,
Who seemed to have remained the last,

To have my company alone,
Chirruped that he must also fly
After the fading summer sun,
To warmer climes—or stay and die.

I felt the tears roll on my cheek,
I felt as if my heart would break,
At losing one who never more

I'd talk to by the pleasant shore ;
And said, while from a branch all bare
And withered, the poor bird looked down :
' I'm very sorry you must go,
Thrush, from this place during the snow.

Indeed, indeed, if you will stay,
I'll feed you faithful every day.'

At this the bird a little while

Stood, piteous still. Upon his bill
Methought there came a mournful smile,

A little moment—then he hopp'd
Restless about the bough, and dropp'd
At last upon my shoulder here,
And tried to kiss me, dearest dear ;

Then, with a tiny, plaintive cry—
A tear I'm sure was in his eye—
He spread his wings, and flew away.

I never felt so sad before,
Deeming I ne'er should see him more,
As, when returning in the gray

Of that lone evening to our room,
Where the warm fire was burning gay,

Leaving my bird amid the gloom,
Through which a wind began to roar.
But, that same night, the while I lay
Asleep, methought I heard a sound

Outside the window—I suppose

'Twas but a dream—but, up I rose,
And there my comrade bird I found,
Perched 'mid the ivy looking in
Where fell the moon's beam chill and thin;

'Open,' he chirped; and I, the sash
Soft raising, heard without, the din

Of the dim air in the tall ash.

'And where are you going, Thrush?' I said,

'Come in and perch above my bed,
And none, be sure, will harm you.' But

Slowly at this he shook his head,
The while his clear, round eyes he shut;

Then whispered: 'No, Ianmie, no;
But come with me and you shall see
Where 'tis the birds in winter go.'

At this, methought, as small and light,
As he, I passed into the night,—
For I had wings. Oh! it was strange,
But pleasant, with my friend to range
In air about our cottage door.

I felt, but saw myself no more,
As off we swept along the shore,
Where the gray billows curled in foam :

Then over the dark country nigh,
Where half the moon was setting slow.
I saw the cold streams gleam beneath—
I saw the wild gusts wave the heath ;

But, so delightful 'twas to fly
Beside my summer comrade, I
Felt not that I was leaving home.

Well, all that night, o'er flat and height,
Southward, straight on, we flew, flew, flew,
Past woods and cities, fields and plains,
Through gusts of storm and drifts of rains,
And over, what at first to me
Was fearful—a great space of sea,
Where vessels sailed, dwindled in size
To birds, and some as small as flies,
Until the air rose warm and blue,
And all the world around was new—
When, o'er a range of mountains white,
The sun at length, warm, round, and bright,
Glowed gloriously upon our flight.

All day we voyaged side by side
Over a country rich and wide ;
Still warm and warmer grew the breeze,
The while at times remote we spied
Great towns by rivers girt with trees,
And towers, and spires, and palaces ;
Then plains of sheep and regions green
With corn and vineyard, all were seen,
And figures on the long roads gray
And in the fields—no larger they
Than we ourselves, so high we passed—
Moving on many a winding way.
But, as we sped swift as the wind,
I saw but little clearly : things
Now distant, now were left behind,
So well we plied our pairs of wings ;
Till, as the sun was sinking fast,
We rested in a wood at last.

It was a tranquil, cheerful place,
Where beech-trees broad and sycamores
Covered a hill ; far off were shores
Of a bright sea, and just a trace
Of one low, azure mountain line
In little bays and jutting capes
Fading in haze along the brine ;
But, round us all was new and fine—

Dry meadows, sunny hamlets, streams,
Orchards, and vine-draped trees with grapes
Purpling in the setting beams ;
And what was best of all the rest
Stretches of ripe, delicious wheat
In which we flew about, and eat ;
Then to the wood returning searched
For a snug nook wherein we perched ;
And in the clear, warm evening air
Sang both together joyously,
Until the dark fell everywhere,
And the white moon rose o'er the sea.
'Come,' said the Thrush, when we had found
Deep amid leaves, high o'er the ground,
A place to sleep securedly,
'How like you where we thrushes go
To pass the winter, far from snow,
And wind and want?' 'I like it well,'
I whispered, 'for in this warm dell
We're just as near the sun as when
With us 'tis summer.' 'Well,' said he,
Pecking his breast, the while his eye
Began to close all drowsily,
'As we are tired, we'll go, "by-by,"
And with the sun be up again—
For here I've much to show you.' Then,
Close nestling in that nook aloft,
With hearts together beating soft,

We kissed each other fondly, shut
Our eyes, beneath our warm wings put
Our heads ; and hearing but the sheep
Bleat in the meadows—went to sleep.
But, when I woke—oh, strange !—instead
Of being far away with him
In that old tree, 'twas in the dim
Room beside yours, and in my bed ;
Nor, waking, thought I of my dream—
If dream it was—until I heard,
Awhile ago, my friend the bird
Sing yonder, in the setting gleam,
Telling me he had reached our sky,
To live once more, as heretofore,
A summer sweet as that gone by.

A gray Day by the Sea.

By the shore of the gray seas,
Solitary, sad, sublime
As the wastes of space and time,
Wave follows wave, even as the flood
Within the frame of pulsing blood,
That lives and dies in harmonies ;
Until to me all Life seems one,
And yonder moving moon and sun
Heart and brain of the mighty strain
Vibrating an endless rhyme
Through the infinities.

The Ghost's Promenade.

THERE was a long, old road anear the town
 Skirted with trees;
One end joined a great highway, one led down
 To open shore and seas;
There was no house upon it, saving one,
 Built years ago;
Dark foliage thickly blinded from the sun
 Its casements low;
And through the upper, broken and decayed,
 The wind and rain
Entered its vacant chambers, dim and frayed
 With time and stain.
Long, ivy trailers round the door had grown;
 The ruined gate,
That swayed of windy nights with rusty moan,
 Tall, desolate,
Seemed murmuring for the happy years long gone
 To sullen fate;
And each the other seemed to watch alone,
 Like love or hate,
Or, for some action sometime to be done,
 Silent to wait.

Even in summer the long walk that led
 Between them drear,
For all its leaves seemed whispering of the dead,
 And full of fear ;
At twilight, as you passed, a ghostly breath
 Seemed swooning near ;
Life had forgot this house, and even death,
 Since the last bier
Shadowed its path, for people long grown old
 Were infants then :
Forlorn it stood, deserted, distant, cold,
 And strange to men.

Of evenings, when the moon, mingling with day
 Slanted among
The summer foliage of this olden way,
 Folk, old and young,
Came from the town awhile to breathe the air
 Of fields and seas ;
Lovers beneath its shadows whispered there,
 Couched by the trees ;
And others, who had made it their resort—
 As I, who write—
For exercise, or after labour sport,
 Were used at night
To see a tall and solitary man,
 Vague to the sight,
Walk in the shadows, gloomy-garbed, and wan,

And weighed with care ;
And when the middle hour of dark drew near,
And few were there,
'Twas said within the gate would disappear,
As though he were
A shadow of the place, silent and drear,
Or breath of air.

One cloudy autumn night, when it was late,
And lone the road,
As I was passing by that gloomy gate
Awhile I stood,
And as I gazed on the deserted place
Felt a strange hand
Touch me ; and turning, saw the strange man's face,
Mournful and grand,
Smiling upon me with a spectral grace,
Cold, pale, and still :
"'Tis late," he said, " and you may enter here,
Friend, if you will."
So courteous was his look it banished fear ;
So after him,
Without a word, I passed along the drear
Avenue dim ;
Entered the dumb door, which stood wide, and soon,
Mounting the stair,
Found myself in a chamber, where the moon
Beamed cold and fair

Through the chill, broken casement's glassless sash,
Free to the air,
Which murmured 'mid the boughs of elm and ash,
And through which there
Long, glossy ivies, blent with rose, had grown
The walls around,
And o'er the mantelpiece, in shadow thrown,
Gleamily wound.

At first I thought that we two were alone;
But soon I found
Two other Shadows there : one young, yet gray
Was he, in sooth ;
And one, a maiden, blue-eyed as a day
In April's youth.

As with them and the high, clear moon I stood,
I knew right well
That all were phantoms without flesh and blood,
Under some spell :
Yet, so familiar was this house, whose brown
Chimneys appeared
From my high study chamber in the town,
I nothing feared ;
Nor had I cause, for kindly were the looks
Of all the three,
As those of clouds, or stars, or olden books
In my library.

At length the spectral host, faint-voiced, said :

“This house is ours ;

We hold it still, albeit we are dead,

From the unseen Powers,

And shall, until the secret of our doom

Is known, as soon

It will ; we three once perished in this room

Under yon moon,

Which looked upon us seventy years gone by.

My brother there

Then loved and loves our Eva, even as I.

Love cannot share

The heart it treasures : so we fought and fell—

One might like this ;

And she, maddened by deed so horrible,

After one kiss

Given her dead cousins, whom she loved like
well,

All lonely,

Knowing her life henceforward worthless, fired

A weapon we

Had left, into her bosom, and expired.”

Thus saying, he

Pointed unto the bullet marks which traced

The dim wall o'er,

And to the stains of blood not yet effaced

Upon the floor.

Then she, who hovered by the casement in
The silvered light,
' Mid rose and ivy, lifting slow her thin,
Faint finger white,
Advanced in the slanting moonbeams, said :
" For many years,
For our dark fate, that wrought in deeds so dread,
Fell our dark tears ;
But, as even had we lived, we had been dead
Long ere this hour,
As we still loved, long since has sorrow shed
Its useless shower ;
And on this very night 'tis ordered,
Before this rose
With dawn shall ope its leaves, that we depart
To the repose
Of spirits ; happy that still, heart to heart,
To us 'tis given
In a fair phantom region to dwell,
Bordering on heaven,
And, as our fate was Love's, remote from hell."

She smiled, and touched me with her hand serene.
Like drop of dew,
Chill, timid, tender, was that touch, I ween,
And gracious too,
With gentle sympathies which hers had been
In life passed through ;

When the first sound of city clock that tolled
 "Twelve" sounded afar,
And when it ceased I felt the dawn draught cold,
 And saw one star
Shine through the dark trees, happy as her eyes;
 And then 'twas gone,
As they were—a long gust swept through the skies—
 I was alone.

When I awoke—for this was but a dream—
 So strong oft times,
Impressions of the things which only seem
 Vibrate like rhymes,
That forthwith hastened I to the old road;
 And as I gazed
Through the dim gate on that once drear abode,
 Stood much amazed;
For workmen were at work within, without,
 Who with the o'ergrowth
Of herbage and of trees had made rude route.
 The antique youth
Of the once foliage-hidden walls was cleft
 Ruthlessly down,
And not a trace of rose or ivy left
 The door to crown.
As, entering, I trod the stairs so late
 Trodden by me,
And sought in that void chamber, marked by fate,
 Its company,

But found instead two labourers, one of whom
 Wrought at the floor,
And one tore from the window the sweet gloom
 Of leaves it bore.

The place was still the same as I beheld
 Some hours gone by ;
But though unsuspected, still I stood enspelled
 With phantasy,
Awhile, till it resigned its influence
 To visual truth ;
Yet, although thoroughly assured to sense
 Neerless in sooth,
Perplexed, I was about to quit the place
 Where I had seen
Those friendly ghosts and her sweet phantom
 face
 Smile in the green
Light of the moonlit leaves with mournful grace ;
 When glancing on
The hand that she had touched, I saw a trace,
 Slight, bluely wan,
Such as the lightning leaves upon a leaf,
 Or, oft upon
The mourner's temple has been stamped by
 grief :
 And though have shone

Suns many since the night of that so brief
Communion
With those three spectre friends, and my belief
In them is gone ;
Neerless this phantom signet thus impressed—
'Twas possibly the effect of phantasy—
Will still remain till I have reached my rest.

The Wager : A Rebel Scene of Pagan Rome.

I.

ROME looked from her mountains seven,
Circled by her victories :
Around, the conquered terrene lay
By her thunders awed and riven,
Even unto the furthest seas,
On which the shadow of her form,
Winged with storm
And robed in garment red as gore,
Was mirrored round from shore to shore
Armed with force and policy :
While from the four points of the heaven,
Fear of her breathed through night and day,

Nations, once mighty, crouched around

This lion, each a beaten hound :

Greece, Asia, Afric, Scythia, Gaul,

On bended knees approached her wall ;

Beheld their high-piled opulence

In palace, temple, street, and square ;

Amid the tumult and the glare

Her life of savagery intense,

Yet in its might, magnanimous ;

Her bloody, proud, luxurious

Material magnificence :

The daily game of murder played

To myriads, noble, slave, and maid ;

Death's triumph, life's indifference.

O'er many a clime-connecting way,

Life, genius, beauty, riches come,

Driven by the ministers of doom,

From east and west, through night and day—

On conquest's altar vast to pay

Their tributes to sustain her sway

Which in its tempest terrors burned

The hosts to dust that warward turned,

And brains that shone, and cheeks that bloomed ;

In like tyrannic lust consumed :—

And in the temple of the land

Death's phantom, armed with iron brand,

With furious foot and bloody hand,

Laugh from the gate, beholding hell

Imperially invincible.

II.

It is the time when fierce Caligula's reign
Like a wild torrent hastens to its fall,
And terror o'er the city holds its pall,
As down the azure Mediterranean main,
An evening rolls its golden clouds toward Spain,
Laurentium's ancient town shines on the height
Of the long ridge bathing, in beauteous light,
Above its laurel woods that spread away
Along the headland, blent with olives gray
Even to the curving sands scarce snow'd with spray.
A lonely scene it is and sweet and fair :
The fisher barques are still far out at sea ;
And, save the sound of waters solitarily
Rolled into leafy shadow from the glare,
Voices and music only stir the air.
Here, one, sequestered on the quiet shore
Sits singing to the red declining sun,
With a white quill of ivory o'er and o'er
Striking his golden-stringed barbiton ;
And, where the glory bathes the wooded capes
Of a green upland under azure heights,
Another minstrel, roofed with vineyard lights,
Chaunts forth his latest fancies amid shapes
Of pleasance, arbours, cupids, girls, and grapes ;
While from the lengthening shadows which entrance
The hamlet in whose midst a fountain heaves

Its jet of crystal like a shining lance,
In the soft splendour showering from the sheaves,
The curved pipe of the minstrel in the leaves
Seductive calls the maiden to the dance.

III.

Anear the seaward hamlet in the glow
High shines a many pillared Villa, girt
With gardens on the cool, green forest skirt,
And south and westward by the level flow
Of the fresh waters breathing at the feet
Of the white stairs fronting the little bay,
Where swims a silken-sailed pinnace gay ;
While through its open window'd chambers sweet
Echoing with music, and the beat of oars,
The odour-souled sun wind softly pours,
From wooded islets rimmed with auburn shores,
Upon three revellers—one black as death,
One golden-foreheaded and fair, beneath
The cedar roofs airily resting by
Columns of Ethiopian ebony,
Amid that gorgeous compassing of gold,
Curtain and crystal, marbles manifold.
Talking o'er many a theme, as they recline,
Before their lavish feast of fruit and wine ;
For there, on elaborate sideboards shine

Aureate salvers of emerald cherries
Apronian red and Julian sweet,
Blent with the Cœcubian's round, dulcet berries,
And large Lusitanian, black with the heat,
Meroes' vintage, Bithynian cheese,
Melons the gold noon of Berenice dapples,
Bunches of thyme, all untouched by the bees,
And sycamore baskets of pale Cretan apples,
Amphoras fragrant with Italy's wine,
Pure from the grape or commingled with brine
Are ranged in the cool of the fountain that strews
Its sprays like an Iris of myriad hues,
Reflecting the sunset on pillar and floor,
With ankle-deep saffron and rose scattered o'er.

III.

The slaves have placed fresh cups upon
The apple-blossomed Molossian
Tables of marble smooth; while one,
A little Syrian boy, most precious
Unto Petillius, the host,
Because of his enormous cost,
For he, indeed, was beautiful
As any rose, with life as full
As Summer, round the couches tripped,
With vase of Setine wine delicious:
Of which, while languid Cœsius sipped—
Sidelong disposing soft his head
Upon the silken pillow, he said:

“The Greeks, in sooth, write well of life,
And Plato dreams about the soul,
Both as 'tis here, and when 'tis fled,
Most musically. I have read
The Egyptians, too, and many more
Who join the speculative strife—
Vainly; for none know of the dead
Once they have left this mortal shore.
Such proofless problems, however rich,
Like bubbles, burst beneath the touch.
He that recalls from Hades here
One soul, is my philosopher—
An art none yet have learned, or will,”
He added, with indifferent smile,
Bent o'er his cup, in which, the while,
A jewelled finger trifled with
A rose-leaf fallen from his wreath,
In listless, ebrious mood—until
His dark-faced neighbour, Jugurth, who,
When in his native Afric, reigned
A prince, with serpent swiftness raised
His small, black head, and on them gazed
With sensual, emerald eyes: deep quaffed
His cup, and from his thick lips, stained
With wine, scarce moving it, low laughed,
“You men of Greece and Rome,” said he,
Deem death a mighty mystery;
Whereas, in Mauritania,

I, Jugurth, several times have seen
Our witches rise the shadow screen
Of Hades, and to life restore
Bodies whose pulses beat no more."

Petillius smiled on Caesius,
And said : " A truce with fancies, friend ;
Once the breath ceases, there's an end."
" End !" the Numidian sneered, "*Sa, sa,*

You speak, not having lived with us.
Behold this phial." And he took,
Complacently, from a golden hook

Upon his loosened girdle, wrought
With many a quaint and rich device,

A crystal blue and small, the which
Upheld, he added : " This I bought

Sometime since from a wondrous witch
In Auzia ; and 'tis worth the price
I gave her ; for, before I prayed,
I saw this sable-gendered maid
In noonday raise a phantom shade ;
And, still more strange, restore the breath

Unto a corse already cold—
For I examined it—with death.

This you may credit as you may
Your life, the sun, the night, and day ;

One drop of this blue liquid here—
No matter what your volumes say—
Will make a corse start from its bier :
I've seen it done." So earnest, bold,
Was Jugurth's look, the revellers both,
Deep wondering at what they heard,
And soon with deepest interest stirred,
Passed each to each the amulet,
Though dubious of its virtue yet.

Then Jugurth said : "Come ; I will bet—
Although, perchance, you may be loth
To make the trial—any sum
Or value you select, that I
Will take this Syrian child, who sings
And serves our wine so pleasantly ;
Make him expire, and then restore
His life, fresh as it was before.
The minute next : 'tis but the trick
Of blowing out the taper, then
Blowing it back from the red wick—
But much more certain"—and he passed
His long, black fingers through the rings
Of the boy's tresses. Both the men
Breathed quick a moment's space. At last
Petillius said : "Agreed : this boy,
However, whom you would destroy

And then revive, cost somewhat dear—

Twenty sestertia. If the cast
Favours you in this curious game

And new, you purpose playing here,
Why—you shall win, for 'tis the same,
Either the boy, or sum I name."

"I take the bet," Jugurth replied.
Petillius, patting on the head

The rosy child who stood beside
His pillow, then, half sighing, said :

"My pretty Syrian nightingale,
Oru, we purpose for a while
To try with you—it makes me smile—

A curious play—you need not pale—
The pain is but a pinch whose sore
Flies in a second with a sigh.

Fear not, my boy, and when 'tis o'er,
For thus obeying my commands,
I promise you—your liberty."

"Most fair," Cecilius drawled. The boy
Laughed, clapped his little milk-white hands,

And shook his golden curls with joy,
In the dead light that faintly fired

The sea-line past the headland gray.
"Lamps!" They were brought; the slaves retired.

"Now, Jugurth, you begin the play."

"I've drank too much," said, starting up,
Cecilius; his golden cup

Half filling from a plate of snow—
“To recognise with clear attent
This delicatest experiment
Of Afric magic lore, and so
Thus clear my brain,” and he lay back
Observant in the perfumed glow
The candelabras poured. The two,
’Twixt whom the bet hung, double quaffed
Their cups, both trilling on the rack
Of expectation grown intense,
Beneath polite indifference ;
As Jugurth, beckoning Oru, laid
Upon the marble board apart
The crystal. “Boy, be not afraid.”
Then, seizing him, a lithe, bright blade
Drawing, swift drove it through his heart.
The pretty child stood firm, nor cried ;
A moment, on his master turned
A look of fond security,
Smiled, shuddered, heaved a piteous sigh,
As life surprised the fainter burned
In his large, glazing, soft blue eye ;
And, falling on the pavement, died—
He had regained his liberty.

The three bent over him, each brow
Bursting with sweat. Said Jugurth : “Now

Assure yourself that life is gone,
Petillius." "I am satisfied,"
The other; and the African,
Whose ebon forehead had grown wan,
Dropp'd through the rosy lips, by one
And one, the magic liquid; tried
The pulse in the pale wrist. At last,
When by the water-clock an hour
Had passed in watching that dead flower
A growl burst from that bloody mouth
Of Jugurth bitten through, as he
Rose crying: "You have won; and I
Must sell my land and cavalry
To pay you: cursed witch, accursed
Fool—I know not which is worst!"
The others standing silent by
Quenched with deep draughts their nervous drought.

The Fate of Athos.

ONCE, at an altar marble white,
A youthful sculptor wrought,
When to his chamber's casement fair
Used come a girl of beauty rare,
Who loved him as the flower the light,
With love by him unsought.

Oft 'mid the casement's leaves which threw
Their shadows o'er her face
And bosom, she for hours would stand
And laugh and whisper, 'till his hand,
Erring beneath her eyes of blue,
Would lose its artist grace.

And, as to him his labour seemed
Thrice holy, for it blent
Love, art, and faith together, he
Would feel enraged, as tremblingly
His chisel missed the bright intent
Of which his fancy dreamed.

Cold as the white moon's lonely flame
By which he stood or knelt,
To her the artist seemed to grow ;
While warm as grape-bunch in the glow,
Athos, whose poor heart knew no shame
In seeking his to melt.

But as he grew inflexible,
Lo ! to a witch's cave
One night she went alone, to try
Desperately what might destiny
Reveal—even though it spake from hell
Up through the gloomy grave.

High on a sterile mountain gray
: The cavern yawned in gloom :
 Dimly a thin moon shed its light,
 Through the vague wilderness of night,
 As by the dark-jaw'd den of doom
She stopped, like one astray.

A dim fire smouldered far within ;
 A savage face with eyes
 Mysterious, and blasted hair
 And outstretched raven claws, was there ;
The obscure chamber smelt of sin,
 The blue flames smiled like lies.

She told her tale, and asked her fate
 Trembling, and then was dumb.
 A knife flashed, and blood spouted dire—
 The claws held something o'er the fire
Above which bent that shape of hate
 Muttering, with down-turned thumb :

“ Follow thy will, through good and ill,
 His shalt thou be eternally,
 His, and that soon—so saith the moon—
 Away, and win thy wished-for boon.”
And as Athos hurried adown the hill,
 A wild wind rose up from the sea.

That day the young girl dressed and decked
Herself with dainty art;
Love glowed in her cheek's rose, and breathed
From every tender tress that wreathed
Her coy white forehead, sunny-flecked,
Love filled her happy heart.

Love seemed with her fair form to move
In airy light aloft,
'Till in the dim room, laughing sweet,
She flung a nosegay at his feet,
And on him gazed with eyes as soft
As a Damascus dove.

And there she played her innocent wiles
An hour or more, as he
Deep angered at her ill-timed sport,
And at his erring work amorn,
With head averted, silently
Avoided her gay smiles.

At length, just as his chisel's stroke
Had marred one angel form
Upon the snowy altar's side,
And as her laugh of peccant pride,
And love offended, scornful broke,
His face grew dark with storm.

And snatching up, in heedless mood,
Her wreath, he dashed it back,
Crying: "Away, Athos, away!
No longer trouble me to-day."
But soon in horror stood, alack!
The girl stood red with blood.

For he had flung, amid the flowers,
A graving tool unseen;
And as she laughingly bent low,
Thus to receive the playful blow,
Into her neck the weapon keen
Pierced 'mid the rosy showers.

Ah, love!—ah, terror! kneeling there
Anguished, he vainly tried,
Desperate in tenderness to stay
Her life-stream flowing fast away;
Soon was he lone with his lost bride—
Alone with his despair.

Time passed: within a marble tomb
Was hapless Athos laid.
He died not by his hand, but gave
Himself to justice and the grave;
His only hope within its gloom
To meet its murdered maid.

At length a morn of cloud and storm
Domed o'er the land and flood,
And silent, weeping city, where
Upon a scaffold in the square,
On each side of his praying form
Beadsman and helmsman stood.

But that same tearful night 'twas said,
While others slept, a few
Passing the Sculptor's chamber lone,
Paused, startled by a music moan
From the dim inward; and all fled
Save one, a comrade true;

Who, gazing where the full moon's light
Shone through the casement's vine,
Beheld the youthful Sculptor's Shade
Lead hand-in-hand his phantom maid,
With sweet, faint sounds and looks divine,
Up to that altar white.

The Spanish Diligence.

DAYS have passed since the Diligence bound
Valentiaward this winter night,
Has left behind in gloom and wind
Brown Barcelona's straggling light,
And spires and turrets, under ground :
At times some hamlet on a height
Or sidelong seen through a ravine,
Twinks sadly ; as with whip and goad
They urge the six scared weary horses down the
rugged mountain road.

Eight in the front, in the banquette ten,
Muffled and drowsily rumble along :
Some are asleep, all dumb as sheep
In the gusty gloom round their swinging pen :
To-night the Mayoral' stops his song,
So blind is the path by fell and fen—
Each turn a terror : should they go wrong
At the hillside turn where they'll meet the blast !
He rises, lashes them, gallops them, dashes them,
giddily edging the danger—past !

"Safe for an hour,"—the Zagel^s cries,
Running along by the horses' sides
In his jack boots; "*Yarre*, ye brutes;
Capitano, steadily up this rise,
Geelip, Valeroso—on, my prides,
Whiche'er of ye stumbles now, he dies :
Yo, yo—in the dark you're the best of guides"—
And the road runs now by a sea of plains,
Flooded in every hollow, desert-desolate, swept by
slanting rains.

Now in a wind-blown village bare
They pause by a smoky posada's door.
Like a nightmare team in a cloud of steam
The horses puff in the torch's glare,
Which splutters and dims in the strong down-
pour :
And the *bota* goes round for all to share :
"How the winds"—one cries—"from the seaside
roar!"
Then, ere they start, an old hag in the blast,
Tottering, thrusts them a crucifix, screaming: "Look
to your souls, for this night's your last!"

The sweeping storm down the straggling street,
Well nigh of itself had the vehicle blown ;
But saved from the blast by a gallop as fast
Down the shingly way, through puddle and peat,

Were the nearer horses, galled to the bone ;
With necks 'twixt their knees—for the most dead
beat—

The leader with head erect alone.
Not a light's on the waste save the oil lamps' glow ;
As through deluge and desert they splash and swing
toward the sound of the awful sea below.

Round barren summits of mountains gray,
Roaring forests and ravines black,
That rise to the right ridging the night,
The blustering winds through the darkness sway ;
Following fierce as a wolfish pack ;
The Diligence down its dangerous way,
With twenty souls upon terror's rack ;
Knowing Torreta near, where they
Must graze the steep sea road which slants toward
Orropesa's surging bay.

"The worse spot of the road," groaned the Mayoral
hoarse,

"Where the torrent crosses, must now be near :
The gloom's like a pall—God, guard us all !—
As a little way down the coast sinks sheer.
When we started to-night, a cloud like a corse
Haunted me sidelong, stretched on a bier :
And when darkness shut the sunset down,
The Dead's moan seemed on the wind to follow, and
devils in every rock to frown.

"I can't see the way—our speed's too great—
Rein in, if you can, on this shelving path—
There's a watery sound from the lower ground—
The horses swim—holy saints—too late!"

They are caught in the torrent's strong sway
beneath—

O'erturned—swept away by a furious fate—
From the watery hubbub shrill shrieks of death—
As borne by the torrent tumultuously
Struggling horses and drowned Diligence roll o'er a
precipice into the sea !

Song.

I.

My dreams were doleful and drear ;
And I wake with the sound of the sea
Murmuring desolately.
Winging athwart the morning red
In the sombre glare
Of troublous air,
A passing crow shadows my bed :
And closing weary eyes
Against the early skies,

The fitful lapse and rouse,
Of the autumnal boughs
Around the lonely house,
Tire me to rest again with withered lullabies.

II.

The east wind, arid and frore,
Has been blowing from levels of gray.
All through the dismal day
Vacant and sad was the garden's light:
Around the wild shore
Beats evermore
The surge;—and again it is night:
And I hear the sullen boom
Of the billows through the gloom;
The universal stir,
And distant dim demur
Of the tempest's harbinger,—
While darkness settles heavy o'er the roof, like doom.

III.

The hearth flamed long in a glow—
Then, redder and dimmer grew;
Funnelled the wind in the flue;
And I heard the old doors swing,
Open, and creak to-and-fro,
In the ghostly rooms below—

Then cease. And with the morning's birth,
A happy calm is on the earth,
As of a latter Spring :
The blue waves scarcely sigh,
The crows soar calm on high,
The seas shine, and anigh
Flashes above the sunny reef some snowy wing.

Window and Hearth.

I.

AROUND my chamber books are piled,
Save where my favourite pictures are ;
One window fronts the east, and one
Is turned unto the setting sun :
Thus, o'er my papers, morning mild,
Now glories, now the evening star.
In summer, from the garden trees,
A blackbird warbles with delight—
In winter, roofed from snows and breeze,
A cricket cheers my hearth at night :—
Sing constantly,
Sweet friends, to me,
Who, as your nearest, I love best ;
Wake me with song, blackbird ; prolong
Your ditty, cricket, when I rest.

II.

So full of life thy liquid note,
That I in sunshine drop my pen,
To let you tune my heart once more
With memories of yon morning shore,
By which, in summer days remote,
We rambled to some Wicklow glen,
Or Howth, whose blue back yonder looms ;
And argued miles of road away ;
Feasted ; and back through golden glooms,
Shortened with songs the darkening day :—
Now friends are dead,
And scattered
Those hours ; but ye have stood time's test.
Bird, from the lawn, sing to the dawn,
You cricket, when night fills the west.

III.

A breezy radiance stirs the skies ;
The withering currant-bushes shake
Above the crannied red brick wall,
Where, as the crisp leaves curling fall,
Now up and down the cobweb flies
The sunbeam ; and the midges take

Their last of life, till afternoon,
 Slanting the pictured wall with gold,
We shut out soon the pale, chill moon,
 And rouse the fire against the cold :—
 Smile from your nooks,
 Brown olden books,
Which vanished hands so often pressed ;
 Cricket, prolong through night your song,
Our blackbird slumbers in his nest.

IV.

Now darkness falls ; the funnelling blast
 Oft interrupts your chimney song.
 Between the curtains I can trace
 Orion's arm in icy space ;
Above, the white clouds voyage fast,
 Below, the dead leaves whirl along ;
And as yon infinite waste of fire
 Makes us, poor insects, equal seem,
Methinks at times you would inquire
 What of this little life I deem ?
 Where we both choose
 Song to amuse
The tranquil hours which we love best,
 Till fails our strength, and we at length
Alike be lapped in nature's rest.

V.

Childhood's an Eden ever young
In which the senses blossom sweet ;
Youth, a vague dream, whose every mood
Is coloured by the earnest blood ;
Into noon's furnace man is flung
To fuse and mould amid the heat
His powers, as the ripening light
Develops from the flower the seed,
Which, after equal winter night,
In novel climes new life may breed :—
Chant, bird of youth,
Your song of truth,
Enjoy your summer, build your nest ;
When shadows fall, cricket, recall
The fireside memories you love best.

VI.

October's gone : my bird has flown
To lands of summer past the sea ;
Through barren boughs I now behold
Blue skies, pale sunshine, snow clouds cold ;
But, by the hearth I'm not alone,
For still my cricket sings to me ;

Thus, when I've passed from dreams of earth
To new, bright life beyond our air,
Perchance some friend beside my hearth .
Will read the verses I made there ;
Some echoing
Gay morns of spring,
Some richer hues with summer bloom ;
Leaves, brown and green, which soon, I ween,
Alike will wither round my tomb.

Song.

I.

THE skylark soars on sightless wing
Up from the sunny grasses ;
The splendid Spring clouds billowing
O'er azure mountain masses,
Shine o'er the rough green wheaten plain,
Or, rising from the spacious main,
Shadow in gray shafts of rain
Along the budding woods : while through,
The disentangling woof of blue,
Drip, drip falls the dew.

II.

Through hills that shadow distantly
A path points like a gleaming hand,
Beckoning all from the gray-waved sea
Into the heart of the leafy land ;
The airs that float from the crescent bay
Along the twilight lowland way,
Come faint from the deeps of the dying day :
The slow bell rings on golden wings
Above the green wood's murmurings,
And whispers—come away.

Sonnet.

Ah, Love ! first felt when summer days were bluest,
And warm the rural solitude, where brightly
The sun shone, and the south wind lifted lightly
The beech woods' leaves—how richly those imbued
Life with delights of Paradise when newest ;
When glances coily charmed, and hand touched
slightly,
Enchanted the sweet blood with faith the truest,
And brought the hour when the kiss given nightly

Outparagoned all preciousness. Awaking
To hear her voice, and in the garden meet her,
And take the treasured rose than all things sweeter,
Save her red lip : to rove, we cared not whither,
Lost in each other, growing one together—
If heaven be happiness, Love, 'tis of thy making.

Song.

I.

THE wave upon the brink of day,
In the saffron shadows dancing,
And the star beneath it glancing
 Wait the coming
 Of the gloaming
That shall blend them ray in ray :
Thus to the distance where thou art
My love-lit bounding-fancies fly ;
So rising through thy gentle sky
 The smile that long
 Has waked my song
Shall pour its lustre on my heart.

II.

The bud is growing for the bee
Each apart and yet together,
'Till amid the purple weather
Joyous living
One is giving
Honey dew, one minstrelsy.
So thy heart each summer hour
To a deeper crimson rounding,
So my harp the richer sounding
Count each nearer
Day the dearer
That shall blend them, song and flower.

Song.

I.

"WHEN do I think of thee?"—dreaming and waking:
When in the warm, sunny stillness of noon,
I look up from the page, and when the slow moon
Through the dark, ivy leaves of the casement is
breaking;
When dawn from the verge
Of the far line of surge

Glamours pale on the dews of the long, cheesnut alley;
When the ray far away from the marge of the bay
Fills the corn-yellow slopes of the sun-warm valley.

Beside me I fancy thee breathing, and near me
Image thy whispers in moon-lighted trees,
In the rustle of reeds warmly waved by the
breeze,

In the voice of the roseate vesper-lit seas:—
Where'er like thy smile
Heaven's light falls awhile,
Love seems from all objects around to endear thee.

II.

“When do I think of thee?”—waking and dreaming:
When on the low mounds of morning the kine
Feed in the gray wind; o'er the bleak, wintry brine,
Where the snow surge of cloud settles tranquilly
gleaming;

When under the light
Of the short summer night

The crake sings content in the dim, grassy meadows;
When the low, palèd dawn flushing mountains and
lawn,

The last stars sink faint through the warm, azure
shadows.

The autumn winged winds of the stormy dome bid
me

Away o'er the seas to the place where thou art;
Awaking when life is all silent, my heart
Sings low in my ear like thy voice : on the floor
The moon-imaged leaves shape thy name o'er
and o'er :
In all lights from above,
In all darkness, sweet love,
Love seems from all objects around to endear thee.

Sunset Song.

I.

ROSLY, aerially,
Yon cloud across the sunset sails—
A gondola in a golden sea,
O'er which the glimmering crescent pales
And, in the filmy prow, one seems,
With oar suspended, whispering dreams
Under some beauty's blushing wreath—
Even as your troubadour, my fair,
If through such rich domains of air
As wafts them, voyaged we—
Delighted lays would breathe;
Love fancies, blent with poet tales
Of joy and glory yet to be.

II.

Rosily, aerially,
The boat has now become a bird,
On peaceful plumes, enchantedly
Voicing a harmony unheard,
Over celestial woods afar,
Unto the evening's sacred star
Throned in the mellow west :
Even as I, my love, would fly
From earth's rich glories to some sky
Pale as your peaceful breast,
And, lulled by airs divinest, die
Under your spirit's sphere of rest.

Sonnet.

WITH the moon alone in summer night,
Heaven within me, and from yon pure deeps
Present in innumerate pulsing spheres—
While all life along the glimmering land
Is hushed, I rest, and think I hold your hand,
And in a dream which new delight endears
Peruse the leaves of annals, lily white,
In which scarce breathing, love, our secret keeps,
Until the scene grows dim through happy tears,
And every flower within the arbour sleeps,

Or seems to slumber—lest a leaf—a dew
Drop falling, should disturb my trance divine :
And only near my heart—methinks, like you,
Bends in the light the honey-full woodbine.

With the Dawn.

Husband.

Why have you risen, to stand with naked feet
And thin robe stirring in the airs of night,
Looking from the casement ?

Wife.

It is sweet
To view upon the broad sea, glimmering white,
Sails, in the low moonlight.

Husband.

I dream'd that you were lost to me afar,
And I had just recovered you once more.
Why linger you ?—

Wife.

To watch that last large star
Sparkle our cradled child's calm slumber o'er.
Soft as the little wave that sweet and frore
Rises and sinks upon the sandy shore,—

He breathes ; and on his face there comes a smile,
Just as the dawn's pale gold has touched, the while
Yon faint cloud cradled on the distant deep.

The calm sea-level turns from white to rose ;
And, as the space a richer glory grows,
The earliest bird sings faintly far away
Upon the poplar by the ocean steep.

Husband.

Awake him not, oh, dear one, till 'tis day ;
To be alive, and suffer not, is sleep.

An Infant's Earliest Recollections.

I KNEW that I was near
To some one very dear,
Whose love watched over me ;
That I was but a part
Of my own "muddie's" heart,
Whose care would cover me ;
That she and I were one,
"Muddie" and little son ;
And I fed from her breast,
Then sank in happy rest,

To wake again and see
Her fond eyes watching me ;
And thus I lived awhile,
And knew her own dear smile,
And knew myself to be
"Totie," as she named me.
And when she spoke, would peep
Over her shawl to see
Her calm face loving me ;
And to her singing sweet,
Would, nestle close, and keep
Nearer her heart, whose beat
Lulled me in the sweet heat.
And I was happy, for
I knew if I should stir
That I was still with her,
Always in dark or light,
If I should wake and move,
I saw her eyes delight
And felt my "muddie's" love
Blessed me by day and night.

I Sunday Scene.

I.

THE sunny blue seas freshly sound,
The fields are full of sheaves,
The autumn woodland murmurs round—
A world of breathing leaves ;
The sloping hills are clear and gray,
No steamer's smoke is on the bay,
But only vapours faint and fair ;
A Sabbath stillness fills each way,
A calm contentment all the air,
As folk pace homeward after pray'r.

II.

Now, by the dusty, cottaged road,
Seated beneath the doors
Of each green-gardened, clean abode,
They watch the sunset shores ;
When bells ring out in evening's smile,
Then sweet hymns rise from the old aisle,
Till slants the moon through mists of gray ;
And, home again, they hear awhile
The barrack drum beat, far away,—
Under the red streak of day.

A May Sunday.

SUMMER vapours, soft and white,
Sleep round the airy sunny Sabbath sky,
O'er full-leaved orchards, blithe with dewy light,
And the blue sea anigh.

The fresh, new smell of grass
Is blown from the long meadows inland, where,
From stile to stile, the quiet figures pass
In twos and threes from prayer.

At time the wind brings down
The breath of blossomed woodlands on the ridge,
Whose ruined turret looms with heroic frown
In the long, red light mirrored by the bridge ;

When crows are winging home;
The shadows deepen, and one solemn star
Flames through the pale space west; and in gray
gloom
The wind begins to sound along the bar.

An Urn.

I.

MUTE Urn, whose heart is empty now
Of the dear ashes of a heart!
Who bearest on thy marble brow
Naught but a name, and cry of grief,
Memorial sad as brief;
Hast thou no echo, like the ocean shell,
Thy vague, dim history to tell,
Or in faint mystic murmurs to impart
That of the soul invisible
Whose form is flown?
A ruin amid whose ruins still thou art,
Silent and alone.

II.

Was it a hero whose proud dust
Was once thy treasure, mournful Urn?
A fool of battle's gloried lust,
Death's puppet in a world where death
Allows of life so brief a breath?
Or maiden fair, whose gentle breast
Love filled, and sorrow laid at rest?
Or poet-brain, whose thoughts would burn

In reverie, like the golden west?
Or wise, bright-thoughted sage?
Or little child, from tearful mother torn?
Love's, life's last heritage.

III.

Yon star-world shining on the sea,
O Urn, upon thy silent form,
Though bright may be a grave like thee,
The symbol of a vanished past
In yonder unimagined vast,
Where suns and spheres, the bright abodes
Of spirits, ranging up to gods,
Awhile in life's eternal storm,
Take shape and die. Yon senseless star,
Ere yet through future fires it pass,
Ere yet from ruin 'tis reborn,
Bears its dim epitaph afar
Like thine—"Alas!"

Lonely Delights.

To visit the dear place
Where love lies buried,
Under the willow whose last leaves are shed,
And seek there to retrace
Dear accents, and the looks of a dear face

Upon the blankness of the years long fled :
To wake with morning's red,
And worship love's sweet shadows which still come
At that lone hour unto my bed,
And, living, make awhile my heart their home ;
When the east, low and still
Is flushing o'er the level, silent sea,
Shadowy, and breathing of eternity ;
And in the garden's boughs by one and one
The simple notes of birds scarce yet awake,
Upon the sacred calm of twilight break,
Like dewdrops touched by the unrisen sun.

The Coming Time.

WHEN the dim hour of thy death-night returns
After long years,
I close my eyes—once, once more to retrace
Thy dear remembered face,
But now no more in tears
As one who mourns
For vanished time and place.
Little in life remains thy love endears,
Save love itself in me,
Save love itself, vibrating from heaven's spheres—
Wherever thou mayest be.

Death grows beloved, as I close from sight
All human things,
All aims of life—griefs, save for thee, and cares;
Hopes, and as vain despairs;
To call up for a moment in the night
A voice that springs
For me alone, and which none other shares.
Love lasts—a star 'mid dim imaginings;
And grief grows less and less, as year by year,
On never-resting wings,
Seem bringing us more near.

More near:—perchance when next December's snow
Falls on thy tomb,
Where, on thy death-day, many a winter past
I've stood, deeming the blast
Bore thee to meet me there—although
Silent in doom—
My dust shall lie below
Close to thy own. And, as a heaven of rest
Exists where spirits greet
After a ceaseless, long, love-earnest quest—
Dear one, before the suns of summer glow,
There we may meet.

Sonnet.

IN my soul's temple, sacredly enshrined
 'Mid airs the most benign, oh ! still may I
 Conserve whate'er of best to beautify
The passing hours, synthetic search may find ;
The truths of science, known to sense and mind ;
The singing pictures of sweet poesy ;
Ideas turned to use ; all forms of art ;
 High sympathies to symphony all strife ;
 A healthy hatred of the lies of life ;
And in the holy of holies of the heart
Love for those loving me with purest faith,
 Volitioned in the future as the past,
 To guard ; or, seek them through the terrorless
 vast,
When the earth melts beneath the touch of death.

Eumorphia.³

A SKETCH OF CULTURE.

A POET sate within a room
Whose casement opened on the brine;
The place was full of studious gloom;
Around the walls the Spirits of Time,
Their guardians silent and sublime,
With which his wont was to relume
His airy fancies' changing plume,
From many a volume, new or brown,
Upon him day and night look'd down;
And o'er the nook, where hour on hour,
By red morn, sunset, or moonshine,
In moods of beauty or of power
He mused, was scrawled a single line:—
"Creation is a life divine."

For many a season here he wrought
His pictures of harmonious thought;
Content and poor, exalt, alone,
Until, companions near distraught,
Great Nature and himself had grown;
Now through Imagination's sky
Winging the starred immensity,

Now life's warm sphere from zone to zone ;
Delighted when some poem new blown
Glowed on his page of music and light,
Which, though all heedless and unknown
To others, yielded its delight ;
For, wrapped in rich creation's trance,
The outer world of circumstance
Rolled viewless ; like a soul asleep
Is his that dreams o'er fancy's deep ;
And genius owns a secret grace,
Whose motions other spirits move :
The poet's mind, like woman's face,
Charms by its beauty and its love.

First, deeming all save Beauty null,
In worshipped visions passed his days,
All feeling-full, all fanciful ;
Then in the cold, reflective rays
Of subtle reason bathed his soul,
Self seen from tropic unto pole ;
And in creation's fruitful beam
Gloried Imagination's dream,
Then came through that charmed Eden world
The sensitive and sentient brain,
Thoughts musical, with power amain
In universal sunshine furled,
Now rich, now soft as pity's rain :

As comes at morn the honeyed hum
Of brown Hyblean bees along,
As soars the skylark's matin song,
As sheds the balsam-tree its gum ;
As rounds at eve the floating moon,
O'er ocean's floor, and fills with light
Each sparry cave and shelly beach ;
As falls in orient woods at noon,
Dropp'd from the trellaced azure height
Upon the moss—the golden peach ;
So waked by books or circumstance,
Or inner deep developed trance,
Came fancies o'er his spirits bright,
And ever-broadening expanse.

Life has two worlds, awake, asleep ;
In man's, all Nature is enshrined,
And represents the sum of all ;
Asleep, the tree ; conscious of mind,
Animal, human, spiritual,
Their varied order sequence keep ;
But wrapped in spiritual sphere,
And noting life and nature here,
Where myriads tread the world untaught,
Like insects o'er some page divine—
Unknown the characters of thought—
Unheard the music of the line,
Or by some pretty purpose moved,

Without prospective purpose pass
To where the grave-stone sighs, alas!
Eumorphia, conscious that the soul
Grows by its will to deity—
That as 'tis here, so shall it be—
Without a culture, constant never,
Ascending or descending ever;
A bubble-light beyond death's goal,
Drifting along some mightier river,
Or crescent sphere of clearing power
Won from each thought-developed hour,
Self-centred as the ages roll;—
Resolved, while life was his, and time,
And the imaginative mind,
Whose law, whatever it designed,
Evolved symmetrical result,
Despite of circumstance occult,
To harmonise its varied rhyme,
And make each beauteous and sublime:—
To map his life in tracts of years,
And as the natural powers unfold,
Let culture tend each stem that bears
The fresh, green flower or fruit of gold:
To sail, while yet the morning smiles,
Through fancy's rich and fragrant isles;
At noon, along the fruitful plain,
To gather in the golden grain,

Developing to heaven's sky
Each phase of force and faculty ;
And, moving on from youth to age,
 With thought and earnest toil secure,
 The fruits of life and mind mature,
Heaped for the future's heritage ;
To light his race o'er earthly roads,
 Philosophies that splendour bright
 As planets on the infinite,
And poems, like the dreams of gods.

Thus, year by year, with ordered speed,
 Time closed its circles round the sun,
The while Eumorphia wrought his creed
 Of Culture and Production ; bright
Each morning looked upon some form
 Of art commenced, and evening's light,
In summer's peace and winter's storm,
 On some ideal victory won—
Some fancied theme, some novel dream,
Of beauty, cast upon the stream
 Of everlasting mind. So he
From many a gold and gloomy string,
 Evoking music by the sea,
Self-shaping, self-developing,
 His spirit for eternity,
Dwelt under heaven's tranquil wing :—

One love, with pure, perpetual smile,
Lighting his clear soul from afar,
Which, like a lonely, fruitful isle,
Shone, angeled by one star.

Thus year by year he wrought his crown,
Till from the lands anear, afar,
Across the Atlantic's wat'ry war,
From Australasia's red sundown,
By tropic and by arctic star
Illumined, re-echoed his renown;
Till like the Lybian boy who caught
The crimson-plumaged birds, and taught
Their sweet-toned tongues to hymn his name,
And winged them off again the same,
Till Afric deemed his birth divine,
And pledged his deity in wine,—
His verses round the planet wove,
His genius hymn of truth and love,
His fancies in a million hearts,
Became their happy counterparts,
And built his soul a throne supreme
Of noble harmony and dream,
Ensphered amid the radiant vast,
Where reign the godheads of the past.

At length, when spring was in the air,
And freshening April glimmered fair
Above the mountains and the wave,

One pale dawn through the casement there,
The golden surge of morning cloud
Flamed on the vanished poet's shroud.
That eve, his comrades sate around
The book-piled library where
He slept, and spake of him late flown
Beyond the æther's azure bound,
In thoughts' clear-voiced monotone;
All sorrowless as of the brave;
And now as of a statue white
Completed; and the stars of night
Sparkled from the eternal height,
As silently his corse they bore
To its still grave.
There now and then a violet springs,
A bird at dawn or evening sings;
And while the vast machinery
Of Nature, swaying through God's sky,
Toward some vast Spirit Realm of Day,
Inevitably holds its way;
Evolving from material-base
Still higher grades of heavenly Race;
The ocean, in its calm and storm,
Vibrating to the unseen powers
Of matter acting throughout space,
In harmonies of varied hours
Yields from its everlasting form,
An anthem by his resting-place.

Summer Wanderings.

By the old canal that spaces down
In long, blue levels, dashed with gray,
To the smoky line of the spirèd town,
Two artist comrades wander slow
Under the still sun's indolent glow,
And falling leaves of the autumn day :
A happy holiday assigned
For pleasant ramble, when the mind
Released from the working light
Of thought and energy of will,
Clears for a time its wearied sight,
And takes each touch its nature round
From sea and sky and shadowed ground,—
Giving its sensitive pulses play,
Free as the sunny air to-day.
One was a youth of vigorous mould,
With deep, bright eyes and flaxen hair,
Broad chest, and forehead firm and fair,
Clear smile, and gesture free and bold ;
A type of intellect and will.
The other sensitive and still,
With eyes of rich ideal light,
And cheek that like the pale north night

Suffused with faintest fancies changed—
A dreamer, but a colourist true,
Whose spirit amid the rainbow ranged
As its true home, and like it grew
Brimful of tears and sunshine too :—
An April heart, a spacious soul
With fancy's richest emblems stored ;
Fantastic, melancholy, mild,
In brain a king, in heart a child ;
Yet who, when fired by fancy, poured
Its gathered glories wild and warm,
Like to a golden autumn storm.

“ Here let us rest : ” upon the grass
Beneath the beech-trees' tinkling dome
They stretched. Far off the noonlight poured
O'er breadths of stubble, shadow-scored,
And harrow-levelled tracts of loam ;
And up and down the wrinkled edge
Of water gray, wavered the sedge ;
A warm wind in the branches stirred ;
And silently the swallow skirred ;
And by the long road lad and lass,
Beside their patient, panniered ass,
Paced slowly towards their cottage home ;
While heavy barges in the heat
Laden with level piles of peat

Passed onward towards the rising ridge,
Where gloomed beneath the spanning bridge
The dank brown lock, with spirt of foam.

Here from the autumn meadow,
Blue aired, and warm, and still,
They watch from the sycamore's shadow
The dripping wheel of the Mill—
The fleets of bubbles wandering
Down the current of the rill—
The stunted oak trees pondering
O'er their shadows on the hill ;
Hear the weary sound of waggons,
And the drover's luzy tune,
And the distance-mellowed crowing
Of some drowsy cock at noon—
While silent in the haze beyond
The wood skirt by its weedy pond,
A mouldering Manse looks drowsily
Over the valley's rushy streams,
Upon whose marge the sallows sigh,
As warm the river-wind floats by,
Faintly through their feathery leaves,
Like spirits in their dreams ;
But the brown old Mill is busy still
With the autumn's yellow sheaves—
And ever and ever its wheels go round

With splash, and throb, and din—

One is lapping the stream without,
One cranching the corn within.

Now as the slumbrous moonlight strews

The leafy road, the mouldering wall,

The rushy margined waterfall,

The inland breadth of harvest plain,

The massy mountain, blue with rain,—

Return their spirits back again

To Grecian forms and Titian's hues,

Where deep in town their studios gloom

With many a face of shade and bloom ;

Rich many-thoughted waking dreams—

Sicilian scenes of nymphs and trees ;

Wild spectres floating on the breeze,

Of inland desolate at night ;

Sweet faces touched with lady light

And timid grace and tender smile,

The beauties of the Western Isle ;

Grave brows of council and command,

Dashed in with Rembrandt's shadowy hand

Angels and saints with snowy wings ;

And here and there 'mid antique kings,

And moonlit scenes of fairy mirth,

And groups around the festal hearth—

Gazing upon the mystic skies

Some sumptuous Sybil shape, with eyes

Of prophet bright imaginings.

But, as upon the bank they lie
'Mid leaves and grasses dreamily,
Full many a picture passes there
With hues and shadows, quaint and rare:—

Lo! down the smoothes of water now
Slides on some old barge travel-worn
And thickly heaped with yellow corn,
From the valley's harvest lands;
Beside the helm the steersman stands;
While 'mid the heaps of harvest wealth
Girls with cheeks as red as morn,
All autumn-bronzed on neck and brow,
Buxom with the sun and wind
Lie in tumbles:—faint behind,
The sleeky ripple gurgles slow
Back to its level calm of glass;
Onward as they slowly pass
The ripples stutter round the prow:
And as the wearied horses pause
Beside the hedge of crimson'd haws,
The veined water-lights waver and gleam
In dappling patches over their backs;
The boat-rope whisps, and drippingly slacks
In lisping splashes into the stream:
Blue insects, in the large leaved cool,
Bystarts jet o'er the quiet pool:
Around the stalk of the hollyhock,

The yellow, long, thin-waisted wasp,
Emitting sounds, now like a lisp
In the dry glare, now like a rasp,
Climbed slowly with stealthy clasp,
And vicious, intermittent hum ;
Nosed awhile each sickly bloom
Withered round the edges crisp—
Then headlong vanishing grew dumb.
Atop of a mound, in the dazzling glare,
Slowly circled a windmill's sails,
With whirr and creak in the warm, broad air
That blew from the harvest vales.
Over his half-door, dusty-white,
The jolly millman leaned in the light ;
Viewing the shadows drift the meadows,
Viewing the spire of the distant town ;
Watching the good folk down in the heat,
Bent with sacks of this year's wheat,
Heavily pace, with cautious feet,
The stones across the trout brook brown ;
Watching the milkmaids clustered together,
Under the mill, on a mound of heather,
Serious-faced, as they listened to one
Who was telling her dreams in the musing sun.
Within a hollow, warmly shrined,
The crimson apple orchards burn
Mid dry mists from Vertumnu's urn ;
Lengths of white cloud stretch on the wind

A bridging arch across the sky ;
Anear them cowslipped meadows lie
By hedges crossed with gates between ;
Afar the mountain, patched with green,
And seaward slopes of sultry gray :
And further still beyond the rim
Of citted lowland, azure dim,
The faint line of the misty bay.
Now in the shade of an orchard wall
 Awhile they lay
 In the autumn day
Lulled by the leaves of a poplar tall.
A cloudy fleet sailed in the heat ;
 One little vessel white and dim
 Glimmering on the ocean rim,
While dimmer still the pale day moon
 Blue glamouring, indistinctly stood
 Above an inland vale—a wood
 On one side, and on one
 A harvest upland in the sun
Yellow with breadths of bronzed wheat.

A ROADSIDE PICTURE. FROM A NOTE BOOK.

I.

BLUE skies tint the river flowing
By yon chestnut shaded House,
Western airs are warmly blowing
Through the garden's sunny boughs ;

'Mid poet books within our bower
We rest—but heedless of their tune,
For over sky and land this hour
Float the soul of autumn noon ;
But by yon full-leaved sycamore
There sits a mother calm and gray,
And by her side, late come to shore,
Her sailor son, brown Arnold May ;
And with the stilly, sultry sound
Of seas, the leaves above them sing,
While netted shadows on the ground
Are wavering, and wavering.

II.

There by the heated orchard walls
Each plum bough held in crimson loop
Along the glaring surface lolls ;
The peach-tree leaves in languors droop,
Laburnums round the portal shower,
And in his casement cage anigh
The parrot climbs, whiling the hour
With snaps of grave soliloquy ;
But son and mother talk the while—
Oh ! they've not met for many a day—
On future hopes whose kindling smile
Makes even mournful memory gay,

And like the cheery, changeful sound
Of seas the leaves above them ring,
And fretted shadows on the ground
Are wavering, and wavering.

III.

Against the oak trunks, rough and brown,
That stoop across the river bright,
Quick reflex waves play up and down
Like wavering marbled veins of light.
And yonder in the meadows stand
A group of men, full in the day,
In shirt-sleeves all, and hoe in hand,
Tumbling, in sultry heaps, the hay.
And Arnold, now—some rough sea tale
Has warmed him into stormy speech;
We hear him say, "the lowering gale
Then swept us towards the surfy beach."
And, like the fitful, surging sound
Of seas, the trees above them ring;
And restless shadows on the ground
Are darkly, widely wavering.

IV.

Now, from yon window trelliced slight,
With roses peeping from the ground,
Comes music, waked by fingers light,
Daintly dipping into sound.

And Arnold's face, so bronzed o'er
With dusking suns and tropic breeze,
Grows crimson as some morning shore,
And eager as the freshening seas.
And ever now his glancing strays
Towards that neat window, white and coy,
While, with a melancholy gaze,
The mother looks upon her boy.
And in the pause that leafy sound
Has ceased a little while to sing;
And shadows on the silent ground
Seem dim and doubtful wavering.

V.

The tune is hushed—he whispers low—
His mother only is to hear;
This tree, that stretches wide its bough,
May catch it in its leafy ear;
But we, length-stretched at its brown feet,
Mark nought save slumbrous noises there,
Like bubbles bursting in the heat,
Or dizzy voices in the glare,
And see the dipping boughs anear,
Tranced in a summer kiss of light;
And through the garden's vista clear
A glimmering glimpse of footsteps white,

Till, once again, the stilly sound
Of leaves in trembling ditties sing ;
And gracious shadows flock the ground
Wavering, and wavering.

VI.

And now the air's warm bosom heaves,
The honied bee above us hums ;
While, lo ! as soft as stirring leaves,
Red-lipped, light-footed Annie comes.
And Arnold dashes to his feet—
Though holding still his mother's hand—
And points unto his vacant seat,
And by those dear ones takes his stand.
The mother looks above, above,
As tranced awhile in a deep prayer ;
And then, with looks of quiet love,
Resigns unto the girl her chair.
And, cadenced like the summer sound
Of morning seas, the blossoms sing,
And o'er their hearts and on the ground
The netted lights are wavering !

RETURNING.

Now on the lock of the old canal
They rest them, looking with evening down
Where the levels spread in many a fall
To the low blue line of the smoky town ;

By the skirt of the branchy woods afar,
Whither the black or rooky crowds
Push through the air, the swift steam-car
Is surging on to the eastern clouds ;
And up by the hill-side farm the call
Of the huntsman sounds with the mingling horn,
And gusts from the fields within the wall
The windy scent of the winnowing corn.
Now the globe of day has sunk away
Under the stretching lands beyond,
And the cattle drink at the rushy brink
Of the glimmering, stilly pond ;
Over the ridge of the darkened bridge
Figures are passing to and fro,
While down the road with its weary load
The cart clatters on in the dusty glow ;
The rain-dark avenue, toward the west,
Winds between elms with many a nest ;
The twilight falls ; the inconstant breeze
Blusters from autumn's yellow day ;
Where the mansion stands in the stubble lands
Tented round by the yellow sheaves ;
And the dog chained nigh with bursting eye
Bouncing barks at the beggar who stands
By the windy gate, 'mid the falling leaves.
And now from the rise of the lock each sees,
In glimpses low the grayish bay ;
And village smoke, and hamlet folk

Pace homeward on the heel of day,
Where, through green caverns of trees,
The dim road winding dies away.
Then, as home they tread, the earth glows dead
And silence comes where it may list,
And from the meadows drenched in shadows
Drifts the keen, chill smell o' the mist.
Awhile the world in vapour furled
Narrows; then clears the air on high,
And brightly now the Starry Plough
Shelves into the furrows of azure sky.

A Cluster of Beauties.

AN ARTIST'S GLIMPSE OF A FETE CHAMPETRE.

ONCE, of a bright midsummer morn,
I left the smoky northern town
By rail, and, swept through purlieus brown
With marl and dust emerged upon
The airy champaign rich with corn
And woodland, glowing in the sun:

Then at a station stopped, and walked
A mile along a rural road
Bordered with ash, by one who talked
Hilariously of all that we
Should presently enjoy and see
At the fair Villa, where abode
Our courteous host, a bachelor lord
Aged and rich, who with his ward,
A beauty, all the beauties round
That day had bidden to a fete
Held on the sloping lawn that crowned
An upland hazy in the heat,
Backed by a beechen woodland sweet
With bloom, and musical with bees :
And presently among the trees
Saw the long roof with ivy coped
The tendrilled casements high which oped
Upon the soft, smooth scythed green,
The marble statues ranged between
Old urns, moss rusted, from whose brim
The scented trailers wavered dim :
The fresh, green fields of July wheat,
The distant lakelet's shimmering sheet ;
The fount, whose wave exuberant rose
In crystal, and then sunk its snows
Into the basin, where the gold
Fish mutely slid ;—the cultured mould

Clustered with dusk exotic flowers,
And all the leafy garden bowers
For morning muse, or noon-day sleep,
Or evening tea. The landscape round
Spread in the sunshine amiably
Down to the level of blue sea
Specked with faint sails : the middle ground
With hamlet and with wheat-field gay ;
And, towards the cool north, far away,
Lowlands of quietness and sheep.
Arrived, we mingled with the throng
Engaged in pleasant pastimes there,
Refreshed on lawn and sunny grounds
By the green whispering forest air.
Around a spacious arbour where
Arose at times a clear-voiced song
With the piano's dulcet keys
Companion'd, grouped in twos and threes
Beneath green boughs on daffodil mounds
They listened to the soaring sounds ;
While in the warm wind from the meadow
Breathing from the river's turn,
Girl with girl and girl with lover,
Chatted the last novel over,
Shaded on the sunny clover,
By the parasol's piquant cover,
Or couched beneath the rose's shadow,
Wavering from some mossy urn.

Some paced the Picture gallery illumed
By the old masters and the new, and schools
Classic, romantic. Here a vessel moored
By pillared city where the Roman rules
Shows its brown soldier groups, armed and helmed,
Thronging the deck : one high, heroic form
Girt with white priests upon the harbour pier
Is sacrificing to the gods of the storm
Ere he for distant conquest shall embark.
Triremes lie in the offing, and anear
A lazy crowd of slaves and women dark
Stretched on the shore—all flamed and over-
whelmed
By Claude's long sunset, dazzling o'er the waves,
The temples, masts, and headlands stretching caves.

Here, at the mediæval castle's gate
A hoary palmer and a quaint, wee dwarf,
Brown as a stunted thorn, are seen to await
A welcome—while from the hall a gorgeous train
Approach of damsels fair and dainty dames
Robed in the Tyrian crimson of the morn—
Or emerald vesture sprink'd with pearly rains
And lily dress and ribband girdle;—hair
Clustered in aureate mesh—to take the air
Along the grassy, undulating turf
Upon their milk-white mules in sunset there;

While on the steps, a beadsman gray and old
In withered garb, blesses those beauties rare,
And kneels, while on him beams their smiles of
gold.

But richest of all pictures were those two—
“Both sides of the Headland”—one which placed
in view

The lonely beauty of a shore with trees,
Frequented by the ocean deities.
There as the Pleiads rise through golden bars
Of cloud, amid the airy, calm divine,
And on the white cliffs’ fronting marble walls
The lemon-streaming light of sunset falls
Along the level azure-spacing brine—
Lo! ’mid the rocks, glinted with varied spars,
A Nymph reclines ’mid dewy moss and vine,
Whose plenteous hair in golden billows swims
On her bright shoulder, and white form, whose
blood

Beats with the glowing grace of womanhood;
A faint leaf drooping from her pure brow dims
Her blue eyes’ crystal sparkle in the moon:
In shimmering waves, her feet like pearl-shells dip
Clear ’mid the rocks, and breathes upon her lip
The soul of the deep red midsummer rose;
While the fair wind that softly ceases and swells

Along the foam and silky grasses, flows
Down from the twilight promont's sparry halls—
Faint from the woodlands, cool with deep brown
wells

And glimmering drifts of distant waterfalls.
This was a scene of beauty, dream, and rest :
While on the other, fronting the sea's breast,
The many-masted harbour glimmered pale
With gloaming ; and they view the white moon rise,
As on the goldened waves gray mariners sail
Laden with ingots from the western skies :
Ripe grain and ruddy fruit round fountains fair
Are heaped in mellow harvest everywhere ;
The sides of the low hills above the brine
Shake with the airy laughters of the vine ;
And as ascends the flushing vespèr star
O'er the dim sea and shadowy land at rest—
Gloomy and rich spread round the twilight woods,
Solemn the hills beneath the moon afar,
Solemn the stars o'er inland steeps sublime ;
While breathes a cooling presence from the floods—
While music floats along the level west—
Stretched by the wave blithe revellers of the clime
Quaff laughing cups of red celestial wine.

Fair were the pictures viewed, but sweeter graces
Drew the eyes away to the living faces.

There was a nook nigh an open ground
With the warm, brooding lustre strewn,
Where swarmed a well's slow bubbles round
Sun-languid blossoms in the noon,
Anear which spaced a sluiced pond
Within whose glossy depth, pale weed
Gleamed tremulous, and tall green reed
Wavered their heads of fleecy seed
O'er water flies whose gleaming glide
Just traced the calm with fitful slide,
And there I stood unseen and viewed
The bright girl-gathering through the wood.

First toward me, natural as a song
Of Fletcher's muse, came amiably
A beauty clothed in grace along,
With motion soft as music she :
Eyes of bright violet smiled through long
Deep lashes, black as black could be,
And beamed, her auburn hair among,
A forehead fair as the foam of the sea
That mirrors the lights of infinity.

Another rested on the root
Of an old elm—her calm, fond face
Drooped 'mid her tresses plenteous brown
Half loosed to air; one little ring,

Blue as the sparkle of the spring
On her left hand ; one little foot,
Beneath her summer robe half hid
Tuning the pulses of the verse
Her lips to listening airs rehearse
From tone of summer poems ; while slid
The leafy lights with wavering grace
And whisperings upon her down.

Others paced slow beneath the heat
Conversing on the sloping green,
Or, clustered by each summer house—
Sweet hoods about their snowy brows,
Light mantles of carnation tinct,
Skirts that rustled, gems that winked,
The peep of shiny booted feet,
Waving ringlets, laughs sweet
A near, afar were heard and seen ;
And then, as if for contrast sake
As when across the sun's rich flame
A cool cloud sails—beside the lake
Where many then were clustered, came
A pretty Quakeress passing through
The groups, with eyes of demurest blue
Downcast glancing, reserved and chaste
Under the little pooped bonnet that graced
Her small, snowy brow, whose chesnut bands

Were clean and unjewelled as her hands
Modestly placed on her robe of gray ;
And, as around her beamed the array,
Where some of the girls were like roses sweet,
And some like larkspur, piquant and neat ;
Some rich as the clove-carnation rare,
And others like lilies, languid and fair—
All chatting and laughing, silent stood she,
Pale and prim as the white sweet pea.

But hark ! from the laburnums old
A bell amid the boughs withdrawn,
From trembling showers of floral gold
Announces luncheon on the lawn ;
And while a band amid the trees
Plays joyous, distant melodies,
The varied beauty groups regale
On wines and jellies, fruits and meats,
And a hundred dainty sweets ;
While on the soft wind from the dale
Light laughters, graceful speech and coy
Mingle around ; wit chimes with sense,
Wisdom with love, and airy joy
With epicurean elegance.
But, finest pleasures soonest fail,
And—I've just time to reach the mail.

A Group in Queen Anne's Time.

'Tis noon above St. James's Park,
A pleasant scene this summer day ;
O'er haughty belle and modish spark
Glances the light in sunny play :
Along the levels of the pond
The airs in languid pulses stir,
And loom above the trees beyond
The towers of hoary Westminster :
While from the distance eastward there,
Beneath the cloud of smoky shade,
Floats to the Park's politer air
The softened roar of city trade :
Along the grass full many a group
Are pacing slow in lightsome talk,
Full-powdered wig and swelling hoop
Flutter along the velvet walk :
Coy ribands wave on breast and waist,
Rings flash, and lace's golden glow
Displays the deep matured taste
Of blooming maid and brilliant beau :

Now comes a high-heel'd courtier by,
In ruffles, sword, and curled toupeè ;
While glitters in his serious eye
The jest he'll give the world to-day.

For long my lord in bed hath lain
This morn, to make his daily wit :
And, musing deep, was seen to drain
Five cups of perfum'd chocolate.
But now, secure in wit and sense,
To battle moves, with brow of calm—
Three jests are his, for thrust or fence,
And one keen, waspish epigram.

Now moving through the moving throng,
The toast of many a Club appears—
A Beauty prais'd in polished song
Amid St. James's furthest spheres.
Though bright her eyes, her cheek is paled,
For midnight found her in the dance,
And all the morn her fancy sail'd,
Half dreaming, through a rich romance.
So eager she to glean and use
The golden precepts bards have sown,
To guard the heart she feared to lose,
And make all other hearts her own.
So, through the crowd of bowing Wits,
All longing eagerly to woo
Her fragrant smile, she lightly flits,
And scatters looks of courteous blue.
Her hoop before her clears the way—
Her maid behind her treads discreet,
With pink chintz kirtle, slashed with gray,
Slipper'd in silk, and soft and neat.

Now hat in hand, all statelily,
My Lord before the Beauty bows,
And, filled with finest fervency,
Declares her cheek outblossoms the rose.
The while the Lady courtesies low,
Light waving back a perfumed tress;
And through the courtly groups they go,
With proud and conscious carelessness.
The dainty patch—an ebon fleck—
Points out each dimple on her cheek;
Brown ringlets touch the stately neck,
And whisper-mingled laughters break
As on they float; and passed beyond
The silken crush of fashion, where
Along the margin of the pond,
The gold-fish rising take the air,
My lord prepares his doom to meet,
With snuff-pinch in his fingers shrined,
And, in one rounded, rich conceit,
Declares the passion of his mind.
Defend her, heaven! what means the man?—
It may be love, in sooth, for by
Her conscious cheek the tiny fan
Is fluttering like a butterfly.
Nor will she break the lengthening pause,
But paces slow in silent mood;

And with a finger coyly draws
Above her brow the crimson hood ;
And smiles within it, for this Wit
Is heir to wealth and titles, too ;
And she may be My Lady yet—
What more can Maid of Honour do ?

The Courtier, of his prize secure,
Well versed in various female traits,
Settles his cuffs, and swears, demure,
“ That day ’s the happiest of his days : ”
And takes her soft and silken hand,
And, pressing it, is heard to say,
“ Here, sweetest nymph, I hold the wand
Whose touch can charm my heart away :
And as one simple ring shall hold
This finger in its circlet’s space,
My heart, within thy smile of gold,
Shall linger in a charmed embrace.”
But now the Park is cleared, and soon
Beyond the Palace trees the sun
Looks from its western afternoon
Along the cots of Kensington :
Now studious nymphs prepare their arms
In boudoirs full of mirrored light ;
And add to their resistless charms
With riband, essence, jewel bright.

III.

Now by the mansions of proud magnates, and of
gouty Sieurs, they passed,
Where valets by the porches leaning, yawned in
sunshine wearily ;
While from their courts some equipage, or sumptuous
interior flashed ;
And others, tapestried and dusty, of the old nobility,
Where venerable *piquet* reigned in stately pristine
purity.

IV.

“ My faith, I’ll mark this day with a white stone,”
the smiling Marquis said,
“ Whereon I visit, accompanied by Wit—the
brightest of the time ;
Our friend, Lalure—the latest, freshest, softest
beauty, rural red ;
For doubtless you, whose genius plays in rôles
as many as a mime,
Will fix her graces in your verse—immortalize
this day in rhyme.

V.

“ Our friend is of your province ? ” “ Yes, I’ve seen
the blossom richly blow
To beauty in its morning dews,” said Arouet,
with a sudden sigh :—

“But now she’s left the songs of birds for odes of
costive-brained Rousseau,
Green nature for the gilded court—and for the poets
—poetry,”

He added, coldly, turning on his friend a gray and
sparkling eye.

VI.

“Last summer, sir, I lived a month in Poiteau,
where as yet her nest

Was known to few. We passed our days amid the
woods and murmuring brooks;

Each morn her bouquet was the verse my love
dream moulded during rest;

The bleat of lambs awoke us, and at night we
slumbered with the rooks:—

Meanwhile, I learned much more of love than
from a century of books.

VII.

“At length our neighbour, Sieur De Launy, came to
his chateau:—he saw,

Was charmed; and married Mademoiselle; and I
retreated with my pen

To scrawl sardonic on dead feeling’s precious vase
without a flaw,

'Till love was lost in tears and ink :—oh, days,
delightful were ye, when
My heart but beat to sing :—but—she is happy,
with the best of men."

VIII.

Thus chatting, they arrived. The Marquis trimmed
his ruffles, gave his nose
A perfumed pinch ; and both were ushered to the
chamber of the bride,
Where, early as it was, a group had come to worship
that sweet rose—
A grave count, perriwigged and starred, three
courtiers, and a duke beside ;
In semicircle seated, uttering epigrams with
stately pride.

IX.

Squares of building stony gray, enclosing greenest
garden parks,
Retired in cool, collegiate calm amid the dusty
city's roar,
Were northward seen from the *salon* ; and heard at
dawn the city larks,
Soaring in azure ether pale the aged brown
libraries o'er,
Where early, earnest student foreheads bent above
their lettered lore.

X.

Southward, the chamber's lattices stood open to the
fragrant air

Of summer-fronded sycamores, amid whose languorous leaves the green

Reflected lights on curtain, painted ceiling, cabinet
and chair,

Golden as autumn's dryest sheaves, fell with
a cool, refreshing sheen,

And portraits of the Great, that from the walls,
still courteous, seemed to lean.

XI.

And, intervalling chancellors grave, and Marshals,
perriwigg'd and armed,

In robes of state, and bluest steel, with pen and
baton, Beauties brown

And fair were seen, whose smiles and sayings many
a memoried reign had charmed;

Yet, none in life more lovely than the mansion's
mistress, whose renown,

Eclipsed at court, 'twas said, all envious, trembling
jewels of the crown.

XII.

A chemisette and cap of lace alike coquettishly she
wore:

Rich with delight of lucid gems, bosom, and brow,
blue-veined shone;

Her costly, crimson cincturing scarf from lissome
waist flowed to the floor,
Where, satined white, one little foot peeped out,
in covert like a fawn,
From silks of soft and sunny tinct, like amber
mists along the dawn.

XIII.

A small, carved glass of muscat sweet smiled by her ;
on a stool apart—
Needled with pet pup's portrait—lay her bonnet,
diamonded and plumed
With ostrich feathers, won from rainless regions of
swarth Afric's heart ;
While on a cedar table, near her perfumed gloves,
a jonquil bloomed,
Above a box of carcanets in polished ebony
entombed.

XIV.

A gay and genial reserve through all her graces
seemed to move,
Though but a month since ere her dainty, tiny
finger bore the ring,
So beauteously wild and playful was her mood, that
frolic love

With roses would have pelted her, through thickets
flying; or with wing
Hoodwinked her laughing, azure eyes, and black
brows thinly crescenting.

XV.

And eulogies upon her beauty—purposed to be heard
by her,
Together whispered some, and illustrated by their
courteous eyes;
Fondling her half unconscious pride—as when a soft-
hand smoothes the fur
Of some pet puss or pigeon half asleep, and
purring lullabies,
Or cooing calm contentment in some nook where
leafy sunshine flies.

XVI.

“How piquantly that patch becomes the Mareschale’s
bloomly cheek to-day!
’Tis like a fleck of raven feather, dropp’d on morn-
ing’s roseate snow;”
“Heaven made her an enchantress, and us happily to
feel her sway,
As it makes star and bird to shine and sing, and
perfect flower to blow—
My faith!—to other faces, hers comparisons as
dove to crow.”

XVII.

"In Florence I have seen the Venus," lisped a courtier, "but, *par Dieu !*

Not Grecian marble, wrought in pure Praxiteles' divinest mood,
Can emulate her form—or colours such as Tiziano drew

From April Irises, approach the tender grace of breathing blood—

But—fancy cannot flatter truth, and truth to such soft charms seems rude."

XIX.

Thus some among the visitors; while she in turn conversed with each

In accents velvety and gloved, in semi whispers affably,

Pretentious lest their polished praise, her little rosy ear should reach,

Made pleasant pastime, breathing incense to her beauty, the while she,

Turning to Arouet, who stood beside her, murmured laughingly :—

XX.

"I hear you poetise me, friends, and I should ask our poet here

To sing my thanks, as none else sure, could do with such a grace as he,

As well I know ; for ere my marriage to his muses I
was dear :—

Oh, days of sweetest maidenhood ! still relics
treasure I of ye,

Yon favourite bird, and Monsieur's bright *billets*
d'amour as you shall see."

XXI.

So saying, as she rose, she pointed upward to a gilded
cage,

In which a nightingale was sleeping with brown-
head beneath its wing ;

And from a sculptured cabinet of cedar, dark with
polished age,

Drew forth a tiny sheaf of papers, tied with silken
scarlet string,

From which depended, as she gladly held it up—
a little ring.

XXII.

"Behold !" she said, "those verses, friends, which
Monsieur penned when I was poor ;

And although now I've carriages and castles, and—
do as I choose—

Such relics of my rural days are doubly precious, be
ye sure :

Past pleasures ever fairest seem, like scenes in
distant light and dews ;
And, though Love claims *this* ring—by *that* I'm
wedded yet to Arouet's muse."

XXIII.

And here she laughed delighted music, pouting lips,
through which, like spray
On the fresh ocean's roseate morning line, shone
dainty pearls a-row ;
Replaced the verses in their shrine, with gesture fond
and graceful gay ;
Then with bright, pleased, downcast eyes, resumed
her state with movement slow :—
When the awakened nightingale, burst forth in
fullest music flow.

XXIV.

And, as the Mareschale's equipage rolled through the
court, and all arose,
Grew intermittent in its song ; while Arouet, ere
departing, said :—
"Alas! Madame, my happy life of poetry, now
turned to prose,
Is in yon drawer with my heart: henceforth I
live but in my head ;
Adieu! your bird still sings of love, which, in my
withered leaves, is dead."

*The Suire.*⁴

ONCE I had passed the shortened autumn day
Upon a lonely river; now with oar
Speeding my boat along its levels gray,
Now resting in the nooks along its shore,
Where the rathe grasses made a pillow sweet
With faint, dry odours, stored by the late heat,
And withering height of interlacing bowers
Roofed in the silence of the cloudy hours:
The while I listened from each dim retreat
To the smooth, languid waters lispings slow
Anear, and broad and earnest onward flow
With ruffled rapid's gurgle in mid-stream,
Dappled with foam; or watched some sifting beam
Fan from the sleeping mists athwart the bank
O'er stem of hemlock or wild celery dank,
Or sparkling bubble passing or remote
O'er the gray mountains;—till once more afloat
I sauntered whitherway the waters went,
By rock, or grassy steep, or sycamore bent
Above its image in a glassy dream,—
All through the noon, until the sunset's flame
Levelled through horizontal vapours came

In blinding shafts from the low, wooded West
Upon the wat'ry evening scene of rest—
Warning me of the dark. On which I turned

My comrade boat, whose prow in fancied mood
I'd crowned with wreath of berried ivies black
And woven blossoms wild; and oaring back
Along the shadowy water-way that burned

Awhile with spots of sombre fire like blood,
Smote the sleek levels into foam. Soon night
Fell awesome round the land; large drops of rain
Sparse showered at first, soon thickening down the
height,

Heralded deluge from the distant main;
And lurid grew the void: no more I heard
From beechen brakes amid whose stems the last
Thin streaks of sundown glimmered pale and ghast,

The twilight warble of the unseen bird;
But, from the rising tumult of deep gloom

The crepitating thunder, and its peal
And long, resounding, hoarse, cavernous boom,

As though a world were falling on a world;
And saw the cleaving lightnings blue as steel
Flash from the clouds in pomp of terror curled.

Then in a moment as the air grew blind,
The torrent rain came driving on a wind
That bowed the trees along the river ridge;
When, happily, I reached an olden bridge,

And near the gloom of its impending span,
Moored me aloof from where the current ran.
Familiar was the place: oft from this arch
I'd watched on bleak, blue days of gusty March,
The swallow hither and thither skirring low
After the flies along the river's flow ;
Above me heard the wagon lumbering slow,
And from the tillaged fields the squawking crow ;
Here oft, when sheltering from the July heat,
The trout plump by the bank of rushy peat,
And thronging, chirping sparrows in the wheat
The while the trailers from the mouldering stone
Swayed in the wandering warm wind passing lone :
Here watched the slow, revealing lights, whence slid
Shapes and profiles fantastical that hid
In shade before, and felt the dim arch ache
With weary age, above the foamy flake
That round the buttress slid in stuttering swirls,
And drifted past its gloom in lessening whirls.
But now all dreary was the scene and dread :
The ceaseless thunder rattled overhead,
Shaking the earth that seemed a-light from hell,
With each cloud-opening burst of flame that fell
Along the foaming river, teeming trees
And distance flashing in the swamping seas
Of fire poured down from the infinities.
Close to the forlorn bridge's shaken wall

Massed with thick ivy, had I nigh an hour,
Sought shelter from the straight descending shower,
When methought something plunged into the tide,
And rose remote a sound, like a sweet moan :
But soon the repetitive thunder's tone
Swallowed all other sounds up in its own ;
And when it died, the fancied voice had flown.

At length their came a lull, and more and more
Remote the tempest swept, and ceased to pour
The clouds through which the clear, pale crescent
shed

Athwart the flying drifts, its lustre dead.
Upon the cool, refreshing, airy calm
Rose from exhaling herbage, gusts of balm ;
And I was putting forth again, when, lo !
A near me floated something white as snow.
At first I deemed it but a swath of foam,
But, as the moon shone from its azure dome,
I saw a form—a face serene and pure
As evening when the eastern stars allure
All eyes to leave the earth to gaze on them ;
And on her brow a dripping diadem
Of silken grass and lilies of the deep
Smoothed to her hair, which floated soft as sleep ;
And as I gazed upon the twilight blue
Of her sweet, humid, innocent eyes, I knew

That this must be a Spirit of the stream—
Or else some happy-mooded visiting dream,

Born of my long day's reverie, among
The silent nooks, and whispering leaves and grass,
And beam and bubble, that had seemed to pass

Floating unto the river's moody song—
Risen for a moment, as I thought, to bless
My lonely worship of earth's loveliness.

Yet, surely ne'er took fancy such a form
As this pure, gentle Vision after storm ;
Though I had read, in old poetic books,
Of nymphs a-many of the hills and brooks—
Shapes female fair, with faces simple-sweet,
As flower or orb in the cool wave's retreat :
Brows oval as a shell, eyes pure and meek,
And hair weed-woven, on each wat'ry cheek ;
And others of the summer, zoned with rose,
Or autumn-crowned, whom fancy saw repose
Couched in the mellow West beside their star,
Sparkling o'er ledged hills of shimmering spar,

Or golden forests' solitude, where swoons
In everlasting evening, near and far,
From recluse valleys full of yellow light,
Or lone recesses on the skirt of night,

By fountains gleaming through the leaves, like
moons,
Aerial harmonies of all delight.

But like a child in spirit and in grace,
Though of eternal elements composed,
Seemed this fair dweller of the wave, whose face
Was like a raindrop; though her cheek grew
 rosed
With unaccustomed fancies, thus to meet
A human life beneath the hush of night,
When but winds wander, and the meteor glides,
And stars slant down the earth's dark edge from
 sight,
Or commune silent in the azure height :
And, strange it seemed to her to speak by sign
A little space, nooked from the river tides
By the long sedges, with me, who adored,
As some strange darling image of the brain,
The glimmering beauty of her neck, and feet,
And forehead, like a wat'ry beam divine.
And while, in coy amaze, to stay she was fain,
Smoothed down her dewy hair; yet spoke no word,
But, parting, signalled hope to meet again :
On which she dipped her sweet brow in her hands,
And then gazed sadly upward, while she held
Toward me a little flower, purple bell'd.
This, tenderly I took and kissed, and gave
A leaf from my boat's crown, the which she took,
While, with a low, wild laugh, most like the moan
Of some sad brook, her fitful image shook—

Or sigh of wind through twilight tree-tops blown,
Which haunts the memory with its monotone—
And, holding still the token, sunk to the sands
Of the deep river, and I breathed alone.

Minnie.

I.

O CRYSTAL Well,
Play daintily on golden sands,
When she comes at morning lonely,
Followed by her shadow only,
To bathe those little dainty hands,
All aweary gathering
Seeds to make her blue bird sing,
O crystal Well.

II.

O Forest brown,
Breathe thy richest twilight balm,
As she wanders pulling willow
Leaflets for her fragrant pillow,
Which with snowy cheek of calm
She shall press with half-closed eyes
While the great stars o'er thee rise,
O Forest brown.

III.

O Lady Moon,
 Light her as she mounts the stair
 To her little sacred chamber
 Like a mother ; and remember,
 While she slumbers full of prayer,
 Sweetly then to fill her heart
 With dreams of heaven where thou art,
 O Lady Moon.

Glints of the Year—From a Window.

I.

ON the floor of the low, white-clouded seas
 Long lustres dazzle. O'erhead in the gray
 The soft wet wind through the full-leaved trees
 Sultrily swoons, and passes away.
 The lark is a speck in the mists of the morn ;
 At night the great clusters watch o'er the green
 corn.

II.

'Tis now an eve of softest shadow,
A clear sky west, sparked with one star ;
Through clouds the moon flits ; in the meadow
A cornerake singing ;—list ! afar—
Creek—creek,—creek—creek—in the grasses,
Where the dew falls—the shade passes.

III.

Through chestnut blooms the bees are humming,
The gold streak grows on the apple's rind ;
Dry hazes of fluctuant perfume are coming
From ranunculus beds in rich sunlight and wind ;
And from the orchard's south brick walling
You hear the peach in the hot hush falling.

IV.

The azure lake spreads southward shimmering,
O'ercrossed with misty, moulting rays,
As soft and stilly as the glimmering
Last of slumb'rous autumn's days.
And the swallows skirr o'er the purple heather
In zig-zag flights through the evening weather.

V.

Now ripest heaps of harvest mellow
 Bounteously shelter the olden house ;
 The gleam of the setting sun flames yellow
 Through the windy, withering autumn boughs ;
 Then a ghostly air through the darkening sky
 Swoons off to the sea, with troublous sigh.

VI.

The northern lights, like a drifting dawn,
 Rain fitful splendours over the sea,
 Where, great Orion's arm withdrawn,
 Sparkles wan and distantly :
 And the fly hums round with 'wildered hymn,
 Where the long-snuffed taper is burning dim.

VII.

Now winter round the bare-browed mountain
 Lives in the dumb, gray air, and shrouds
 The pastures ; frozen is the fountain ;
 Aloft the curlew wings the clouds ;
 The crane forlorn by the marsh marge chilly
 In the dismal cold is guttling shrilly.

VIII.

And as evening thickens, the rain storm, driven
In gusts, moans over the desolate lands ;
Then lulls at twelve : from the wide, dark heaven
Pale meteors fall on the stretching sands,
Where the sombrous red moon sets afar
Past the booming line of the surging bar.

Sonnet.

Into the wood at close of rainy day
I walk ; dim cloud above, green leaves around ;
Upon the humid air only the sound
Of drop on drop, stirring the stillness gray.
Almost I hear the rose-leaves drop away,
Too heavily weighed with damp to cling o'erblown
To their wet branches, straggling through the copse
Until the faint waved twilight airs entone
Tide-like along the blossomed beech-tree tops,
And amid flowers and showers scattering, alone
Pass from the fresh dusk solitude along
Meadows in cloudy moonlight, glimmeringly
Seen like the low, blue hills ; and hear the song
Of the last bird, and wash of the cool sea.

A Sunset Adieu.

As slowly tolled the bell, rich evening's hour

Above the roofs of a palatial pile
That rose o'er terraced gardens in full flower,
Cinctured by many a leafy fount and bower—
Into a chamber of its antique tower,

Where hung a golden censer, perfume plumed,
From arched roof of blackest polished yew,
Evolving incense in the sunset's flame
Streaming through one wide casement open to
The spacious West, and ocean's burning blue—

Lo! from the crescent beech woods, summer
bloomed,

Where happy stillness lived 'mid radiances
Of amber air on bole and branch, there came
A gloried music suited to the time,
Embodying the spirit of the clime;

Magnificences first, of solar sound,
Mellowing to golden silences among
Avenues and glens; and fading slow along

Meadow and mountain slope beyond; till round
Returned again, the floating wave of song
More mournful rolled, in sympathy entoned
To the declining orb with shadows dimmed,
As if the deepening twilight which it hymned

Saddened its airy imagery : still
'Twas heard, but now upon a promont hill
Based in the deeps, whose summit looked afar
Upon the fading orange following slow
Across the waves the sinking sun below :
And, when at length the ray of vesper's star
Was marked upon the waters, ceased to blow.
Just then, before it lapsed in distance rare,
While through the chamber shafts of gloried air
Smote from o'ercanopying cloud and sea,
A princess, tall and beauteously fair
Entered, with motion-breathing majesty.
Upon her face the melancholy reigned
Of hopeless love, whose inner anguish pained,
Paling the cheek, but by the brow's serene
Ideal power, exalted and sustained.
She, taking from a cedar cabinet
A casket, poured its jewelled wealth upon
A table : ring, tiara, carcanet
Of sapphire, ruby, pearl, and diamond
For finger, ear, neck, brow, and silken tress,
Which seemed to have concentrated preciousness
In some alchemic cavern of the sun ;
So lustre drunken were the rounds and stems,
The light grew giddy glancing on the gems ;
On which awhile she mused with aspect fond
As sad ; then tenderly the opulent store
Replacing in the box, with one look more,

Closed the carved lid, and seated for a while
In silent muse, gazing with mournful smile
Across the waters to a sunset shore
Unseen, took up a swan-quill with white hand,
And wrote, while died the soft light o'er the land :

I.

“The summer evening gilds the pen
That, senseless as our doom, shapes here
The line that trembles like a tear :
‘We ne’er must meet—never again :’
The chamber where we breathed and read
Remains the same ; as dies the day,
Books, picture, lute, are growing gray,
From shadows gathering round the bay ;
But love, though hopeless, has not fled.

II.

“Beloved, as the sunset rolls
Its golden dusk beyond the main,
Thinking we ne’er can meet again,
I look on high, where, like twin souls,
Two stars of equal brightness shine,
Like us, held wide apart by fate,
Separate, and yet inseparate,
While heaven above day’s western gate
Expands its depths of life divine.

III.

“Between our thrones the waters spread ;
Anear the living breathe the sky,
And from the blue infinity
Allwhere we're compassed by the dead ;
What matter if we meet no more ?
O Love, O Death, an hour must rise
When spirits twain in yonder skies,
Each will respond by Destiny's
Decree, from shore to starry shore.

IV.

“ Care not that other suitors come
To brim a vase that love has filled :
The heart that to the sunrise thrilled
To common afterday is dumb ;
So with me will it be ; for you
I ask but this, as year speeds year :
Place in your heart a marker dear,
That when you read, 'twill open where
My name was written first. Adieu ! ”

An Autumn Evening.

I.

SILENT and sadly over the plain
Closes the wet autumnal day ;
The leaves are falling, yellow and gray,
And the crows fly low in the rain :
Dimly, a glare from the western ledges,
Touching the dank brown river sedges,
Falls on the garden's dripping hedges,
And reddens the distant spire :
Nature is dying ; dreary and damp
Is the world without, so, trim the lamp
And kindle the autumn fire.

II.

Now as it crackles and glitters bright,
Down the old road glimmering far,
Who can say but its ruddy star
May beacon some genial friend to-night ?
Hark ! by the wicket a sound of laughter
Rings through the dusk, and following after
Tinkles a daintier chime and softer,
Sweetening all the gloom :
Hail and welcome ! oft together
With books and songs we've mocked the
weather—
Enter the olden room.

III.

Here as we rest us, round each wall,
Solemnly muse the friendly books ;
Pictures smile from the dusky nooks ;
Shadows fantastic rise and fall.

Here is our banquet—apples mellow,
Pears and nuts in leaves of yellow,
Here in the firelight's fairy halo
Glimmers the flask of wine :

Ah ! but richer than autumn treasures,
We have a tome of poet pleasures—
Open its leaves divine.

IV.

Brightly her blue eyes glance along,
The page she turns with a sweet, small hand ;
What shall it be, then ? Sonnet or song,
Pastoral picture or drama grand ?
Suddenly from the realms of Story,
Lovers fond and sages hoary,
Kings and spectres ghast and gory,
People the gloom, and pass ;
Then some lonesome song or ditty,
Quaint and wild, or terse and witty,
Goldens the genial glass.

V.

Bright flames the fire on our festal ring,
While mirth and music round us reign,
While pausing at our window-pane,
The round moon listens while we sing.
Old memories peeping through the snow
Of fallen years, like violets blow;
Wit winks; our hearts and glasses glow;
And, sweetening all the while,
A gentle spirit with face as fair
As summer, tempers our revel there,
And lights it with her smile.

VI.

Let sombre Autumn shadow along
The empty world in wild unrest;
His leaves but thatch our cottage nest,
His tempests cannot drown our song:
Merrily past our cot is rolled
The harvest wealth of waving gold,
At morn; and when the eve has tolled
Its mournful memoried chime,
The stars shine through the heavens' cope,
'Mid clearing clouds, like spirits of hope,
Beyond the verge of time.

VII.

But hark ! the midnight warning sound
Tolls from the bell in the town below :
The clouds unsettle ; the wind is low ;
The great stars drowse along the ground :
We stand at the gate, " Good-bye, good-bye, "
The moon that looks from a scattered sky
Will shower her splendours mellowly
Over their path of leaves ;
And soft be their sleep till morn again
Redly tinges the drops of rain
Under their cottage eaves.

Fancies.

I.

WANDERING with fancy and a book,
On some late autumn day,
Upon the wide moor spreading round,
When the sun is hot, a pleasant nook
By happy chance I have found,
Where, under a willow a lonely brook
Curves on its way in a little bay,

Whose coasts of grasses, yellow and gray,
Watch themselves in the calm alway.
Here not a sound is heard to stir
But the clashing chirp of the stone-chaffer,
And nothing moves but the thistle-down
Faint and free, except the bee
Bustling through the bells of heath;
Or bubbles blithe on the pool beneath,
Playing a game of hide-and-seek
Round mossy stones; and when two meet,
After a clasp and kiss in the heat,
Either is sure to break:
And the one that's left alone,
Sails about in a wistful pout,
Asking the simple grass-blades where
Its first, last love, so tricksome fair,
So cunning coy, is gone?

II.

The rounded sun, low in the wavy West,
Like a ruby bowl,
Or Bacchant god's rich soul,
Glows from the calm autumnal brine
Into my window nest,
Over my cup of wine;
And with the sea wind warmly blown,
Musing a while alone,

I drink the sun to rest:
 When, sudden by my side,
 As I listen to the tide
 Stealing o'er the flat sands wide,
I find I have a guest;
For, from the window's ivy, edged with light,
Saunters a little Sprite,
And stooping o'er the red cup's brink,
 Into the juice a vine-leaf dipping,
 Raises it up, dripping,
And, with a side-long wink,
Challenges me to drink.
Oh! Sprite, who loves the grassy wells
 And summer roses of the wood,
And airy rambles o'er the shells
 Along the sunny rolling flood,
And scent of apples, gold and red,
 From ivied autumn walls at noon,
Lone walks with leaves dropping o'erhead
 In gusty mist beneath the moon;
And by the hearth a cosy nook
Of winter nights with lamp and book,
When the winds bluster round, and roar
About the woods and surging shore:—
Whene'er you come with dawn or dark,
Long-rosed sea-cloud or starry spark,
Into my casement bright or drear,
A welcome dear throughout the year

Awaits you in the silence here;
Where every song whose thought and tone
Your mood of mirth, of fire, or sighs,
Has shaped in careless images;
Some melancholy as a tear,
Some echoing pleasant laughters gone,
Well knows your coming; and the Lyre
Under a picture o'er the fire,
In music words through all its chords—
Though faint as sunset's distant bird—
Vibrates, with golden gladness stirred.

Glimpse of a Battle.

TAN-TAN-TARRARA, throb the drums!
With their fiercely rapid rattle
Sounding the alarm of battle:
Yonder, lo! a mighty army comes,
Stretched in undulating miles along,
From skirt to skirt of canopying day,
By wood and village, over hill and plain;
And fronting it, another, alike strong,
And eager for the fray.
They stand at gaze
Face to face,
Which shall gain?

Hark! now the trumpets ring,
And from centre and from wing
White puffs of smoke to curl begin,
While in thundering flame and iron showers
Burst the tempests of the opposing powers!
And o'er the smoke the high shells whistling spin
On messages of ruin through the air,
Bursting at measured distance here and there;
The lines of infantry are one long blaze;
And through the hot and dizzy battle haze,
Sullenly fearful and yet fierce as sin,
Now from the nearing,
Hosts, the cheering
Mingles with the mightier din!

And, lo! along the ranks each volley tears
Gaps and lanes throughout the massive squares.
Death is active all around,
In the air and on the shaken ground,
Thickening with heaps of slain;
And ever more and more
'Mid the smash of bones and splash of gore,
Break in undertones through battle's roar
The sudden shriek and the long moan of pain!
As there are currents in the storms and seas,
Forces of steadier intensities,
So from yon park of level flaming guns,
A torrent of resistless ruin runs;

Onward, ye proud equestrian chivalries !
The squadrons form, and in a gallop strain
Of strength and speed united, heavily,
Though thinned by their annihilating rain,
Reach and attack that hot artillery ;
Sabre the gunners at their guns, and they
Spiked, with tumultuous wheel and loud hurrah,
Along the rapid road
Through the shot-ploughed plain,
Gallop back again
While spattering bullets strike, and shells explode !
Thus all the day, while thousands sink in gore,
And thinner grow the fronting fiery lines,
Like billows ebbing from some darkening shore,
Where the red wreck of stormy sunset shines.
The rifle's rattle and the cannon's roar,
The glittering sabre charge of cavalry,
The bayonet rush of furious infantry,
Grow less, under the falling night, on fire,
Now but in spots from belching battery,
While faint, through maddened exultation dire,
Rings out the dolorous trumpet of retire.

And one host's gloomy skeleton, like a rack
Of cloud by thunders rent, falls back,
Shielded through the dismal shade
By its rear guard's cannonade,
Though rent by volleys following on their track :
Until, towards midnight, senseless silence grows

Wider around the ranks of wearied foes ;
Death reigns o'er both : wild victory with one—
Where will the vanquished be next set of sun ?

How long shall Christendom tolerate such fell
Murder *en masse*—this insane reign of Hell !

The Loss of "The Captain."

FEB. 7TH, 1870.

I.

HUGEST, mightiest of all
Britain's floating fortresses,
"The Captain"—canvas crowded—steams along the
 rolling seas,
Weighed with cannon, stored with ball,
And five hundred men her crew.
 As against a promont steep
The long billows beat and fall :
It is night; and save a few
Who watch upon the deck or feed her fires below, all
 are asleep ;
However the rising storm may sweep
Her iron windward wall,
Calmly secure upon the deep.

II.

With midnight stronger blew the wind
Toward Africa on shore, as they
Heaved sidelong, with a planet's speed, rushed o'er
their many-mountained way :
And Finisterre was left behind.
When, as a great gust smote, and she,
With canvas drenched, and cordage wail,
Rose shuddering from the chasm, a gruff
Voice 'mid the tumult warningly
Was heard above the deafened wind: "In such a
night, in such a gale
Without so great a spread of sail
Methinks her steam's enough—
Great God!"—and every face grew pale.

III.

Grew pale, beholding how again
She rolled and rose, her balance lost;
How desperately with weight of wind and wave, the
metal Mammoth tossed :
"Down with the sails—call up the men—
Haste, or we're Death's!"—still rung the bell,
And some rushed up the shrouds, as some
Lowered a boat—into it sprung—
When meeting on the decks, the hell

Of ocean swept them off in foam—
And none remained now to rouse the sleepers from
their iron home,
Which still one stormy second hung
O'erborne upon the brink of doom.

IV.

Then the huge vessel reeling drunk,
Stunned, overmastered by the sea,
Heaving round her like an angry, shoreless, black
eternity,
Plunged, and heeling over sunk!
A long despair scream shrilled
Through the water's horrent hiss,
Raging tumult, rushing roar
From the dark deep, as she filled—
As, to silent night and death, thousand fathoms
down she bore.—
Only a few bubbles o'er
The wide, devouring, dark abyss
Marked where her brave crew were no more.

Winter Noon in the Woods.

WITH witchlike branches, barren, bleak, and drear,
The woods in those cold wintry days appear;
Leaves frost-bitten and withered through their rifts
Shiver, or at their dumb feet lie in drifts:

In icy sleep the little streamlet lies;
The rustic bridge is ledged with snow, and flies
Now and then from the sad branches brown
Some airy faint flake down.

Upon the road the snow lies hard and dry,
And dreary is the sky
Through which the sterile east-wind grayly blows.
Remote, the white hills spread
Into the sea which shows
Its bleak space dull as lead.
Barrenly shake and sigh
In the bitter breeze
That swooning vague and torpidly
Sways their branches brown,
The forlorn trees.
Few ships are on the seas,
And few abroad upon the wintry ways,
So bitter keen the sky
Those dark December days.

And when the sun goes down,
Far away in the smoky Town,
The old folk die.
Oh! ice-wind of the pole,
How many a parted soul
Is whirled by thee away,
Like lonely leaves at close of day!—
Before thou changest round,
Westward or south, the ground
Will open many a grave, and feel the tread
Of mourners many following the dead.

The Herdsman.

I.

ONE dim even, on a hill
Looking bleak o'er vale and sea,
Where the wind was seldom still,
Moaning drear and gustingly,
On a patch of mossy mould
Sate a herdsman, lean and old,
Tears upon his gray cheek falling, blanched in the
whistling cold.

II.

Keenly, through the rustling heath,
Reefs of granite, weather-gray,
Round him rose; and far beneath,
In the hazy valley, lay
Quiet sheep-flocks, white and low,
Like long drifts of thawing snow,
Or the crispy foam of waves when murky night
begins to blow.

III.

Eastward, all was misty, dim,
Save an isle that loomingly
Raised above the fog its rim,
And streaks of wind-drifts on the sea.
Through the lurid clouds of drought
Flamed the low sun from the south,
Like a glare athwart a plain, reddening from a
furnace mouth.

IV.

Toward his grassy-roofèd hut
Moved the herdsman o'er the moor,
The place was drear, the door was shut—
He stood forlorn awhile before
He entered, with a mournful tread,
Where glowered the hearth in ashes red;
Then turned him to a little nook, wherein there stood
a little bed.

V.

Quiet as if in shady sleep,
Fair as a late-plucked lily, lay
The grandchild who was wont to leap
To meet him at the droop of day—
Whose light, now slanting through the rain,
Wavered, in its dismal wane,
Upon her cold and innocent face, still piteous with a
trace of pain.

VI.

There at her side in hopeless swoon
The old man sate, her hand in his,
Many dark hours, without a moan ;
Until his brain bethought, I wis,
How soon for ever from his sight
His comrade should be laid in night—
On which he rose, and lit a brand, and watched her
till the morning's light.

VII.

Mourning, " My darling !"—while the clay
He wrapped within its simple shroud—
" Who cheered my aged days away
As cheers a star some wintry cloud !
No more shall I, her gray old sire,
Hear her clear laugh when by the brier
I turn, nor hold her in those happy arms before
the evening fire.

VIII.

“And sure the lambs will miss her, too,
When she will take their heads no more
Upon her lap, to have their due
Of love; and by the twilight door,
Where in the thatch it used to sing
Bright-eyed unto her in the spring,
Her bird will die—thank God, I too shall follow soon
on broken wing.”

IX.

So mused he till the neighbours brought
The tiny coffin for the child;
When he rose, wistful, heeding naught
Save that poor little ringlet mild,
Which he had cut from her cold brow,
Trembling; and sate apart; till now
They bore the little one away, he following in his
hopeless woe.

X.

A month went by, when, one bleak dawn,
Into the cottage, from whose hearth
No smoke was seen, they came. Withdrawn,
In a dim nook, from griefs of earth,
They saw the herdsman sleeping there,
On his worn face a death-smile fair;
And wept the good folk, finding in his hand that
gentle ring of hair.

XI.

And ere a week a storm o'ertuned
Upon the moor that lonely speck,
And the poor sheep, as if they mourned,
Moved dumb and dismal round the wreck,
Nosing the mouldered planks; but by
The grave, where child and grandsire lie,
A small, blue bird that knew her chanted their sweet
 requiem to the sky.

Ducks Bathing.

From the straw-thatched cot on the roadway nigh,
As the children pace to the village school,
A little maid, with mild brown hair,
And blue eyes sweet as April air,
With sallow wand poised in her hand,
Guides her flock of slow ducks by
The wogling brook to the cressy pool.
Waddle, waddle—on they go,
Grave and silent, white and slow,
Down the sloping, grassy hill;
One, the chief, arriving first—
(A grave old duck, cognomened Meggs,
Mother of a myriad eggs),

With beady eye beside her bill,
Watches the rest askance, who still
Obediently wait until
She signals them to quench their thirst—
Away—they plunge into the water,
Uncle, cousin, wife, and daughter!
Imitating all she does,
In a mist of foam and fuss:—
“Quack, quack, quack, quack, quack, quack!”
And, ducking their heads, they disappear;
Up again—“Quack, quack, quack, quack,”
Scattering the water far and near:
Now on a leg, with a wing outspread—
Flutter, flutter, flutter, flutter, flutter;
Now flapping the water over the head—
Splutter, splutter, splutter, splutter:
Now round about and everywhere, neck, and breast,
and wing she sponges,
Stretching both wings, fluttering still
The bright drops round—and then a bill
Into her feathered breast she plunges.

In a Bohaun.

(OUT OF SORTS DURING AN EAST WIND.)

I.

OLD Jenny Keeran, bent like a bow,
Over the turf fire burning low,
 With one arm elbow'd on her knee,
Holding her pipe, black as a daw,
 While with crippled fingers she
Lighted it with a kindled straw,
 Thus, to her red-cloaked crony there,
Began:—"Lord, but this life is quare!

II.

"Last night, my daughter Kitty, who,
Gossip, I needn't acquaint you,
 Come Michaelmas, has now been dead
Ten long years since she married—well,
 Though twasn't my wish, heaven be her bed,—
In a dream towld me what's befell
Ned Mires—how he was under a spell;
And how he's lost his field of wheat,
And wid it the use iv wan of his feet.

III.

"Faith, a bad mind aint mine, I'm sure,
But 'twas Ned who jeered at us when we grew poor.

When he was a little wicked spalpeen,
And *we*—ah! God be wid owld days!

Had happy been as the fields are green:
I've seen my father in a chaise
Drive back from Dublin, wid two grays,
At harvest-time;—but that is past.
Ned's mother 'twas said—it couldn't last.

IV.

“No more it did. Come, have a whiff:
This east wind makes one's bones so stiff;—

And, now Ned's time has come about—
God's justice, Moila:—*wirristhrew!*

Don't think I'm glad his pipe is out,
And I a Christian, dear, like you:

Ah, no;—but, then my dream was true:
'Twas but last night the sudden blight
Fell on his corn—Kitty was right.

V.

“Bill Tooley's wife has twins hard by;
That's twelve—three more than you or I.

How wid Bill's drinking they're to thrive
I can't decipher. But, God sends

The bird the worm; while we're alive
There's still a chance of finding friends,
And, sure the heaven above us bends;
Though, for poor folk, 'twixt you and me,
Twelve childer is too many—by *three*.

VI.

“What’s the world coming to? Why here
Once it was summer most of the year;
The climate’s changed; that makes the blood
Run cowllder now; and nothing I take
In the way, wid respect to you, of food
Is by many a score as cheap and good
As it used to be. Ach! the wind blows blake,
And the price of yarn is enough to break
One’s heart. See, my wheel there takes its aise—
It now has Sundays most of its days.

VII.

“I’m forgetting the songs that once I knew,
Though of stories I preserve a few
When a friend like yourself drops in:—but why,
As they used to do, the fowl don’t lay,
And the cost of meal remains so high
(And the world improving, as they say),
Is more nor I can fathom. Eh?
Were you speaking? No. Well, come what may,
With the grace of God and a grain of tay
We get through life as best we may.”

The Blind old Woman.

I.

Sit close beside me, Alice, *morrone* ;—

The evening's fine for the time of year.

Thank God, I can knit, though my sight is gone,

Like all my children—but you, my dear.

When I was your age, and even before,

I liked to look at the morning's ray,

From the broken window, where you say

You pasted that paper the other day,

Wherein 'twas towld, how the ship that bore

Mary and Pat had arrived, *asthore* ;

But now I love the sunset more,

For under it lies America's shore.

II.

It's just six months, to the day, I know,

Since we sowld our only cow and the goat

To pay their passage—and saw them go ;—

And, already, they've sent us a Five Pound Note !

That day was the sorest of the sore

That ever across me came, *oghone* !

My heart went with them, and left me lone :

All night you heard me pray and moan.

Once, at the dawn of day, I'd rejoice
To hear on the sunny air their voice;
But now I love the sunset more,
For under it lies America's shore.

III.

Well, thanks be to God for my childer's gift:
We can face the winter-time, anyhow.
When the worst has come, chance gives us a lift,
And it's hard, hard, to live without a cow.
But where is the child I ever bore
That hadn't the heart that proved them mine—
And your father's—about him the heavens shine!
And Alice, my dear, you must write them a line—
How snug we're again, and how I have my tay
Regular—thanks to them—every day;
And how happy I sit at the sunset door,
With my face to them and America's shore.

IV.

I see just as well as if I warn't blind,
What sort of an evening it is we have:
There's a pink frost cloud o'er the sea, and the wind
Comes quiet and chill from the thorn by the grave;
One low, bright star shines just where the four
Roads cross by the chapel, where, years ago,
To the altar I went with my heart in a glow—
Such a dance as we had in the barn below!

And his Riv'rence attended and danced like a man,
And the owld people talked with him, all about Dan,
And at supper we'd tay, bacon, whiskey galore—
God send them as good on America's shore.

V.

But I know that the evening's overcast,
And them crisp-topp'd white clouds darken now :
From the bog-land comes a bitter blast,
Rustling October's leaves from the bough.
Gray and blind is the night, like myself, *asthore!*
And soon like them leaves will come my day ;
So, Alice, *acushla*, lead the way,
Put a sod on the fire, and let us say
A prayer or two for the dead, and the true
Sowls of our blessed ones far away ;
And then—would to God we could show love more—
Go to sleep with our face to America's shore.

A Vision of Erie.

I.

ONCE, in a vision grand,
We saw, above this Land,
Its bright, eternal Genius arise,
With every gift endowed,
But robed in stormy cloud,

And girt about by various Destinies.
O'er her, from foam to foam,
A rainbow arched its dome ;
Clouds swept her throne of sunshine, thunder, and
rains,
Which shone and shadowed o'er
Her mountains, green and hoar,
Her wave-wild coasts, rivers, and grassy plains.
Behind her lay the Past—a mighty sea
Of splendour and of shadow, phantom-thronged
With figures who her state had raised or wronged,
Saviour and enemy ;
And in the space of day,
Remote in vapours gray,
The Future into golden being rising o'er the spray.

II.

Lo! from that Past there came
Figures of fate and fame,
Warrior and minstrel, poet, saint, and sage,
Who with her foes had fought,
Who with their harps had caught
And echoed pagan glories, many an age ;
Who changed her hosts of death,
Inspired by love's bright Faith,
Baptizing thereunto Barbarity ;
Who sailed within the bark
Of Letters, when thick dark

And deluge reigned around, and saved us—History.
And toward the van of that cloud-crossed array,
Still richer in the front of temperate time,
Heroes of mind and action more sublime,
Chiefs of an ampler day—
Spirits whose thoughts and deeds,
For universal needs,
Are omnipresent now wherever life on spirit
feeds.

III.

Then, as we gazed upon
That Future, where the sun
Now lifts through April mists his rim of fire,
O'ergoldening a great
Island, whose summer gate
Glow with the riches which all states desire—
We looked where Europe spread,
And, past the ocean's bed,
Westward and South, saw mighty realms increase,—
Both cradles of new life,
Franchised from history's strife,
Armed with all powers, yet emulous of peace;
And looking past the present's shade and strife
Rolling o'er thrones and hosts, surveyed
afar
Human communities erasing War
Out of their book of life;

And civilisations free,
Based upon industry,
Become the symbol sole of mankind's federative
empire.

IV.

Nor was it man alone
Whose brain essayed to tone
Time's widening harmonies that heavenward run;
But his bright counterpart,
Life's nurse and holy heart,
Who raised earth's anthem soaring to the sun—
Woman—as slave too long
Accounted by the strong,
Or, even in years less barbarous, little more
Than child—maturèd now,
Raised her meridian brow,
As potent, if more soft, from shore to shore;
Emancipated from the ignorant chains of old,
And o'er Intelligence still throning Love,
Her guiding influence was seen to move,
Through stormless climes of gold,
Progress! thy bark, whose course,
By revolution's force,
So often has been wrecked by man 'mid rocks and
billows hoarse.

V.

Then, like the orbs that roll
Through space, from pole to pole,
Crowned with their rights, the Peoples, great and
small,
Moved through the age, intent
On rich development,
The spiritual gravity of Justice swaying all ;
Faith, love, truth, happiness,
Sources and ends which bless.
Each home and nation, and inspire their song ;
And for the races here,
And the soul's future sphere,
Consecrating present effort, passed through time
along ;
Till human lives, expunged of stain and flaw,
Endowed in every zone with liberty,
Perfectest freedom, governed only by
The double bonds of law,
Moved brightly through the skies
Toward vaster destinies—
Above them, God, and in the distance, heaven's
infinity.

VI.

Then thought we, when all those
Nations, no longer foes,

In federative families consulted what was best
For Being, everywhere ;
Our Genius, strong and fair,
Stretched forth a hand to Europe and the West,
To make this Earth's wide Home
One true, bright Christendom ;
Conjoining powers to harmonize all strife
And foster every mood
Of the Useful and the Good
To beautify the deepening Poem of Life.
Then saw we, energised and glorified,
Erie, thy Genius : and a fresh life spring
And flourish bounteous 'mid the isle's green
ring,
And spread its influence wide,
Till field, and shore, and mart,
Throbbled with her living heart,
And golden Commerce robed her, while she crowned
her brows with Art.

Manon.

PART FIRST.—THE PHANTOM.

'Tis lovely summer's short and sweet midnight—
Like spirit sleep 'twixt two eternities.
Clouds northward low like drifts of rose-leaves white,

Or faintest foam of sunken sunset's seas,
Line the warm, dusky earth and quiet trees,
Soon to be flushed with dawn. Through all the skies
Of stars a blue and holy quiet dwells,
So deep, the distant air's dim lullabies
Along the coast and fronded forest wells
Outsound not Manon's heart, whose every pulse
she tells.

As leaning from a casement she looks o'er
The languorous droop of leaves beneath the walls
And shadowy gardens sloping to the shore,
Where smoothly the long, salt wave curves and falls,
Lost in the lonely stillness which enthrals
Earth and the deep, upon whose glimmering line
Fancy oftentimes believes some starry spark,
The sail Love's breath fills, speeding up the brine :
But, no : 'tis vain—an hour hence she may mark
Some speck of white hope dot the far faint flush
dark.

She trod the chamber strewn with rose o'erblown,
Toward a dwarf table, black and small, which
stood,
Carved with quaint faces round, where glowed alone
A lamp of cold cornelian, red as blood,
Whose simple, tapering flame in halo showed

The panelled walls of oak and ebony,
With aged gold and imagery traced,
Like the long cabin of some argosy
Wherein old Egypt voyaged the Ethiop waste—
Then toward a cabinet of blackest metal paced.
The glow-worm golden key entered the ward
Like a flame spirit through the portal black
Of some far-seen steep hell-wall, lightning charred,
Or sea-star dipped in midnight's cloudy rack;
A tiny tick!—the heavy lid flew back—
And lo! this chest of death disclosed within,
Like handfuls from the skies, its jewelled store—
Laces aureate as Indian fishes' fin,
Odorous dusts, scrolls of enchanted lore,
And letters pale as love, and one heart-stained
with gore.
The last she took with piteous fingers fair,
Fearful, and looked on it with dead love's eyes,
As mother on some lock of treasured hair
Sheared from her cold son, when the destinies
Watch the war field from spaces where day dies
In bloody haze; and as her eyelash dark
Quivered, perusing what she knew too well,
To where the death-spot dimmed the letters—hark!
Upon the night the tolling of a bell,
Sweet as from Eden, sudden jarred with sounds of
hell.

Dim grew the paper as she listened—then

The lamp expired ; and in the low-roofed gloom
A light beamed faint as meteor in a fen,

Moving, till, in the middle of the room
Arrived, it rose into a shape of doom—

A youthful knight with sun-dark cheek, soft eyes
Blue as the sea of spring, and lips still red

As corals which beneath it crimsonise—

Aerial all ; as though an April fled

Imaged some cedar's shade, long levelled with its
dead.

In terror she recoiled at first ; but, soothed

By the familiar look of gentleness

Which soon her mortal sense alarmed, smoothed

Into a wondrous winning quietness,

She leaned against the casement where one tress

Drooped from her fair, declined temple, gleamed
With each breath, to a star ; while from the sky

His voice unto her tranced being seemed
Vocal in whispers, vague as love's first sigh
Fondly recalled, and solemn as eternity.

“ Justice permits my presence to be felt

Once more by you, Manon, to me still dear,
That I may tell how hardly fate has dealt

With one once loved—loved still, as tells that tear

You shed, which I would treasure in the clear,
Wide universe of ether where I move,
Could Love enact its will, since it declares
Remembrance :—hearken !—he whom now you
love
With treacherous dagger stabbed me unawares,
And, like yon page, his brow the stain of murder
bears.

“ Were you to wed Julas, for whom you strain
Your gaze across the sea, soon would you find
Your pure and happy soul infused with pain
Of poison flowers exhaled on sunny wind,
And Love’s fruit turn, despite its golden rind,
To death’s : we who have felt what love divine
Evokes in spirits whose melodious chords
Vibrated, as upon the summer brine
The morning waves—when breast to breast accords,
To Demons near must yield what love for true love
hoards.”

He ceased—and he had vanish’d. ’Twas dark dawn
When the gray wind was low upon the land :
Still in the east a sea-star glimmered wan,
Like the small jewel on the pale chill hand
She rested on, and looked where heaven was spanned
O’erhead already with pure clouds of white,

From cape to cape dispersed : airs through dim trees
Stirred, as increased the solemn yellow light :—
Then came the springing morn o'er fresh'ning seas,
And the bay's violet isles were touched with
radiancies.

Confused between two loves, living and dead,
As earth 'twixt morning and the moon ; distraught
With double faith and fancies, by her bed
She knelt ; there laid her fair brow overwrought
By awe so late revealed ; and, praying, sought
For truth and peace ; in fear of coming ill
Well nigh resolved to waste her maiden hours
Alone, and loveless upon earth ;—until
She slept, resigned to the Sovereign Powers,
And noon gleamed round her full of light and
breath of flowers.

For 'twas the warm, blue summer time ; the rills
Voiceless in shadow of deep grasses flowed ;
The green woods sang at peace with the rich hills ;
Through white aerial splendours floating, glowed
The sun, and on the sea which inward flowed
With afternoon, cool from the distance wide
Sparked on some little billow's lifting spray,
Or imaged the steep purple promont's side
Upon the darker depth that by it lay,
Until the land-wind veering, freshened from the
bay.

Around the sands the long, faint tide's salt wash,
Earnestly—endless, from the deeps, was heard
Refreshingly; and fluted the brown thrush
Contentment from some tree, where stretched the
herd
By his warm, panting kine:—clouds white as curd
Gratefully shadowing their large, simple eyes,
Until the low glare closed them drowsily;
The sunny-pulsed grasshopper chirp'd; blithe flies
Slid on the pond or swarmed the honied tree,
And piles of vapour, hazy—dim, stood far to sea.

PART SECOND.—BEATRICE AND THE ZANY.

With her cyprus kirtle trim,
Prank'd with buds and colours dim,
Rustling round each lissome limb,
And wimple, shadowing from the glare
Her glossy growth of chestnut hair,
And cunning, coy, and freckled, fair,
Witching face, with eyes like beams
Of morn, yet veiled by ebon dreams—
Through the meadows of long grasses
Little Beatrice passes,
By the lavender, long hedges,
And drowsy field-well, fringed with sedges.
Jetting daintily along,
Dittying to herself a song,
Which now and then nigh dies away

To let her froward fancies play,
Like a humble bee which stops
Sometimes upon a cowslip's edge,
Whose duleed yellow pulp it crops
A second, or sucks in some flower
Honey full, fresh from the shower;
Then, singing, parts through sunny day.
Her Zany follows wide behind,
Thin, quaint-jawed, mowing to the wind,
Drowsy-browed as noonday owl,
With nodding cap-flaps by his nowl;
Sidelong a sluiced, yellow eye
Glancing antic—bright, and aly,
Ere thrusting his long fingers through
Some bush for eggs, white, oval, blue,
To string with other gawds about
His neck for days of feast and rout.
His scanty beard is white as flax;
Along his withered neck two locks
Hang by his large ears, red as carrots,
Upon his doublet corkscrew lax;
And ere he speaks his tongue he smacks
On his dry palate, like a parrot's.
He has lost his wind with laughter,
Following his long life-joke after;
And so, with wheezing, asfhma'd chest,
He goes upon his queasy quest.

"Come hither," pouted Beatrice,
In thrilling accents, dainty—nice,
"And bear my scarf—so breathless warm
The sun has grown—to yonder farm.
You are the laziest Fool that Court
Or Castle ever kept for sport;
Nothing you think of but to bask
Among the hounds at noon, or by
The hearth at night—"

"Except my flask—
My best of friends, Madonna, save
Yourself: for both I soon will sigh
By turns in vain when I shall lie
In the cold pantry of the grave,
Where I shall eat not but supply
The worms awhile with what I want,—
So bad this cough—hear how I pant
Like a grasshopper in the drought,
Or salmon with a hook in mouth,
Feeling how soon 'twill be his fate
Through other forms to transmigrate."

"Peace, sir; you must not die so soon,"
The girl lisped, in a plaintive huff.
"Could I but live to see you wed,
Maiden, why, I should take to bed,
Deeming that I had lived enough,

And leave night sports unto the moon—
After I had bequeathed my cranks,
Ballads and stories, quips and pranks,
To Quat, the Castle Dwarf, who lies
In the casement yonder, catching flies ;
Him have I cultured—my wit's heir—
To fill my post with comic care ;
Whipped him if he forgot a jest,
But gave him of my drink a share
When he had memoried well my best.
Oft have I this adopted son
Pandied, when he forgot his pun,
As I have whipped my dog, when, slipped
From his black patent, nose uncaught
The meat scrap from the larder brought.
Pudding and praise for excellence ;
While punishment awaits the dense
On high, as here, and as below ;
And so, Madonna, time will show
The parson's plan and mine the same :
Teach but a dog to win a name,
Inspire a dwarf with love of fame—
They will surprise themselves, we know ;
But let the blame fall with the blow.
Though limited my sphere you'll see
How I have trained to excellency.
All social bodies have their rules,
Whether, child, they're wise or fools ;

Hope fails with years, yet were I hero,
I could but say, Dum spiro, spero ;
My Latin clings to me, you see.
Yet you shall hear me sometime shape
A fool's life-taught philosophy
With all the gravity of the grape.
But that I'll keep for winter nights,
When leaden looks the river's flow
Through scattered isles and banks of snow
And broken pailings ledged with white,
When the long, ghostly fleets of clouds
Are anchored on the gray sea-line,
And churchyard bodies slip their shrouds,
And take the winds across the brine
To watch some shipwreck, or commune
With poor souls drowning in the hold
Or gorges :—yield their comfort cold
And see them half-way to the moon,
Ere the red streak of morning warns
Them back to their dark beds, or urns.”
“ Why gather you those flossy flowers
A breath would scatter ? ” “ Marry, maid,
For fortune telling, ” Zany said,
“ Now this shall Manon be, and this
Your pretty little self, I wis:
Mark me : if with my best of breath
I blow this floss whole from the stem

—Your emblem—you'll be married."

"Blow then." He puffed. "Not one of them Remains." But while he spoke, a gust Had bared the second as the first.

"And what means that," asked Beatrice.
(His face had darkened in a trice).

"Marry, my dear, a doom accursed
When the wind conjures thus, a wrath
Came in it, with the omen—Death."

"You frighten me with follies—poh!

A fool and flower to strike such awe
As thrilled me for a second. Come,
Let's to the orchard haste, whose wall
With fruit is now in richest bloom,
Apples, and pears, and plums, and all
The choicest I will take from it.

The basket you must carry back
Will richer be, sir, than your wit,
And than your fortune-telling fit—
A sweeter guerdon too." "Good lack!

How sudden changed the day has grown!

The distant sea is raven black—

A storm!—I catch its angry moan

Coming from where, beneath the rack,

Yon vessel's sail is overblown:

When weather's fair, I'm well; when foul,

I'm heavy as a noon-day owl;

Or, like my dog without a bone:—

But haste—we're in the tempest's frown ;
The first big drops of rain come down."

And, Beatrice, the while alarm
In her white bosom panted thick,
Tucking her ribboned kirtle quick,
Bent to the blast, skirred down the path,
With now and then a little cry,
Like frightened plover o'er the heath,
Or sealark by the twilight shore ;—
And, as the rain began to pour
In heavy deluge, reached the farm.

PART THIRD.—THE SHIPWRECK.

While yet half sunny blue and half in cloud,
Wrathful and low the summer sky appeared,
Manon, regardless of the blast which bowed
The rows of elms and larches, many yeared,
Thinking of her sea lover, still endeared,
Whose full-sailed vessel now approached the bay,
Entered the little pinnance which oft bore
Her beauty loneliness along the spray,
With fancies sweet as breath of flowers from
shore,
And, loosing with swift hand the white sail,
outward bore.

Ah! why did she thus leave the landward sky,
Still clear and bright, though saddened, still
secure,

Like her late lover visitant on high,
Drawn by resistless impulse toward a lure,
Doubtful at best? What will not love en-
dure?—

What dare for the beloved who love?—albeit
The heavens have sent a minister to warn;
But this she now half deemed a dream, a
cheat

Of phantasy in one distract and lorne
Betwixt a living heart and one long in the
urn.

But spirits, like the skies, are everywhere
And of this double truth she thought no more,
But set the sail how best her boat might wear
Against the tempest broadening to the shore:
Dark gusts swept by; far off she heard its roar
Along the surge-line, pale beneath the gloom,
Like lips of foam that show the maddened
mind,
While crashed the thunder from its dome of
doom,
And from the cloudy distance, anger-blind,
Monotonous as mighty, rushed the ruining
wind.

Awhile the pinnacle, like a storm-winged gull,
 Low scudding in a headland's shelter, passed
Toward the wide tumult of the tempest dull
 And black, 'mid flying sprays, its strained mast,
 Bent to the sidelong currents of the blast—
Even as her love-pale spirit, desperately
 Setting against its fate: and now, unseen,
The sun was sinking through the gloom and sea,
 When the great barque in lightning's awesomesheen
Loomed near; the vast waves rolling o'er her lea,
 And on the flaming prow one figure wild—'twas He.

Close on the headland's reefs through boiling surge
 Blackening and lost, the abandoned barque o'er-
 blown

Rolls to its ruin through each swinging gurge,
 Nor hear its cabin'd crew death's long shore moan:
 For most in drunken sleep lie leaden prone,
The while the reckless rest carousing drain
 Wines of the amber tropic, muscadel
And mead, with senses drowned against their bane,
 To fate indifferent, however fell,
 Though drove the vessel toward the abysmal brink
 of hell.

The wind appeared to lull a little while,
 White Manon, clinging to the pinnacle mast,
Cried as the lightning lit her fearless smile,
 "Thus have I come to meet you in the vast

Of stormy waters, like a spirit passed
 Into eternity; love knows not fear:
Reach me your hand, and help me to your heart,
 Even though the desolate ship may be our bier,
At least, oh! Julas; we no more shall part
 You hold me, lift me,—I am safe;—why is't you
 start?"

He answered not, nor while upon his breast
 She hung, and for a second lip drew nigh
To lip, was lover more by love addressed;
 For ere the burst of lightning left the sky
 Together smitten fell they, suddenly
Clasped in death!—and passed each soul away
 In horror first—in thoughtless wonder soon,
Like winds into the wide night o'er the spray
 Of ocean's rolling waste; from mortal swoon
 Scare wakened yet—two phantoms floating toward
 the moon.

But spirits swift collect their consciousness,
 And each to each was known, and both drew near;
And Manon's voiceless love even sought to bless
 The death which linked her unto one so dear,
 When, in the blank, black void arose a drear
And strange, demoniac-visaged shadowy throng,
 Who, as the night wind cleaves a cloud and rolls,
 One-half in darkness, bore him off among

Their influences—parting thus two souls
By spaces vaster far than those between the poles,

Ah! pity Manon's ghost, lonelier by fate,
And left with grief to seek a heaven forlorn,
Like a poor bird mourning its vanished mate:—
But woe is brief to a pure soul new born;
And from the calm rose levels of the morn
Love's truer Spirit soon o'er ocean's floor
Appeared to solace her—a shape which shone
Bright as her own, and, the while passed they o'er
The sea, dispelled her anguish for that one
Lost but a while—then rose amid the stars of dawn.

Summer Evening.

THE West is in a blaze,
And all the country green;
The cattle by the river side
Drink, and sometimes graze;
And fisher boats at turn of tide
With shoreward sails are seen,
Where the pale moon afar
Will rise soon, with its one star.

The summer woods around,
An ocean of green leaves,
Sound like the distant sea ;
Airy shadows on the ground
Lengthen soft and silently ;
And fresh and fuller heaves
By the cape, cool and gray,
The first billow from the bay.

Now dusk is widely spread ;
Birds wing their heads to dream ;
The twisting midges, too, are gone
Under the boughs to bed ;
While the burr of bat alone,
And louder lispings of the stream
(If those whispers be not elves)
Have the wide world to themselves.

Song.

MIDSUMMER once, and Alice was here,
Oh, sweet Alice, pure-cheeked Alice !
Spirit more bright and eyes more clear
Were never enshrined in a fairy palace !
Once, as we sailed towards the golden west
fy lights on our homeward way,

I kissed a blossom which fell from her breast,
And cried I would keep it for aye and a day;
But, as she fain would have it again,
Lo, in our whispering struggle, some way
I kissed—being stronger—the flower no longer :—
Oh! give me, give me, from dawn to dark,
Midsummer hours, and such waftage for ever,
When I furled my light oars by the sides of my
barque,
And drifted along in the moods of the river.

Leagues from Alice, across the snow
Travelled my letters, as hers to me;
But with the April's earliest blow
Together we traversed the lands and the sea.
And summer again was in balmiest glow
On the shores and summits of Italy,
When, floating along the fresh lagoon,
We saw from the waters turret and spire
Mellowing under the mounting moon :
And the hand that drooped o'er our comrade lyre
Was ringed with gold as it waked the tune.
Oh! midnights of Venice, for ever be mine,
With music and love on the moon-lighted billow,
And sleep by the brine where the lattice's vine
Trembles sweet dreams o'er the morning pillow !

A Skeleton Chaperon.

ONE dull November night, when the lamps like blots
of light

Blared through the London fog along each street
and by each square ;

When silent were the byways, and along the leading
highways

The torrent roar of traffic lessened on the misty air,

Through which a dismal bell from a church tower's
pinnacle

Was tolling in the vapours dense that domed the
city o'er,

Upon a student friend, who lived at the East End,
I called, to wile an hour or two ; and finding that
the door

Had been left open by the maid, Lettice, possibly
Slipped out to gossip with a neighbour, without
more ado,

Walked through the hall of gloom, and upstairs to
his room,

And, entering, found him absent, and a candle
burning blue.

On a table, where was placed a paper scrap, and traced
Thereon a line—"Wait for me, I'll be back in
half an hour."

So I sat down by the fire; perused a murder dire
In the paper—crime committed in the purlieus of
the Tower;

Glanced o'er his books of science, which had formed
an alliance

On the shelf, with novels, magazines, reviews, and
other works;

In one of which concentrated so my interest, had he
entered,

I should hardly have preferred his ideality to
Burke's.

And, an hour had almost thus passed in silence,
when a 'bus,

Rumbling underneath, arousing me, I rose, resolved
to go;

When, with some surprise, I caught through his bed-
room door half shut,

The glimmer of a candle; and then, looking inside—
lo!

Saw a ghastly, grotesque sight, which at first amazed
me quite:—

The SKELETON he kept—as many another student
does,

For anatomic study—just as if it had a body,
Employed before a mirror there in putting on his
clothes!

I had known its figure thin, and its bleached, bony
grin,

So long in my friend's chamber—'twas but a
familiar fear

Which at first thrill'd nerve and eye (negative
electricity

My comrade would have called it, had he happened
to be near).

So I asked It, laughing faint, "What on earth it
was It meant

By its master's wardrobe borrowing, in which It
looked so gay?"

"Why, the fact is, my dear friend," It replied, with
gracious bend,

"That I've got to-night some visits, most particular,
to pay."

As It spoke, It had drawn on his patent boots which
shone

But at evening parties; then, with a jaunty gesture
on its crown,

His new hat placing soon—whistling an opera tune,
Buttoned his coat across its ribs; and, lastly, tak-
ing down

A cloak, *en passant*, said : " He had been ordered
To guard himself most carefully on damp nights,
such as this,
For, what in sooth atones for rheumatism in the bones?
The only ailment, happily, which now remained
his."

Thus fashionably arrayed for a foggy promenade,
It then asked me, " If I cared to bear him company
in a stroll?"

Politely adding, " much he'd esteem a favour such,
And, assured his friends would be quite charmed
to know me, 'pon his soul."

So original and queer this proposal, I aver,
That, while laughing at the idea of going out upon
the town

With a figure so made up—with whom possibly to
sup

At a tavern—I consented: so we paced the dark
stair down :

On which, courteously Its arm offering, off amid a
swarm

Of folk, whose frosted breath puff'd in the yellow
gloom, we walked ;

And, as faintly in each socket creaked its joints, as
cash in pocket

Chinks, we quite escaped the notice of the people ;
while It talked

In a soft, familiar tone—extraordinary for bone—

On such common topics as the weather, women, the
world's ways;

And, indeed, besides the smoke, the high collar of the
cloak

Hid its osseous anatomy completely from their
gaze.

When already we had gone some two miles, and were
alone

In a dismal, poor, and narrow street, where in th'
unfrequent pane,

Some candle glimmered dim, I then inquired of
him—

For the neuter term had grown absurd—"Who he
in Drury Lane

Purposed calling on so late?" We had stopp'd
before the gate

Of an ancient burial-ground that rotted 'mid the
city's roar:

"'Gad," he said, in tone elate, "in this quarter of old
Fate,

Though my many friends have gone to rest a
hundred years before

"This present night, yet all will be charmed at our call ;
And, the dead, unlike the living, sir, are always
found at home ;

For myself, I'm, you perceive, quite an exile from
the grave,
Like some comrades in museums : we are Science's :—
but, come,

"The gate is open, and our society at hand
Of which like *it* we have the *entre*." After which
remark

He strode along the path with gay step free as Death,
And looking round him, while I followed through
the dreary dark,

Past dripping herbage dank, over slippery coffin plank,
Protruding through the weedy mould—at length
stopp'd short beside

A gravestone sunken flat, whispering : "First we'll
have a chat,
If you'll permit me, with a woman, who was once—
my bride."

Then with his finger bone, knocking upon the stone :—
"'Tis I, Celeste ; you need not moan, *mignon*, or
start aghast,

As when you heard it sung—ha, ha ! that I'd been—;
I've only called in passing, to recall, my sweet, our
past."

Then, turning round to me, murmured, admiringly:—

“ Ah ! what a face and figure once were her’s!—
an opera girl,

Whose fascinations bright so disordered with delight
Your servant, that from all of them I bore this
perfect pearl ;

“ Such a nymph queen of the boards ! even nobility
crossed swords

For the brilliance of those smiles, which make me
even now feel queer ; ”

Then, to me (his hand aside), “ In their beauty,
woman’s pride

Is immortal ;—well, how passes on *your* life in
death, my dear ? ”

“ An inimitable wench ! ” Then I heard in fluent
French

A voice of careless gaiety reply : “ Oh, much the same ;
From the shrine there, *mon amis*, of our dear Terpsi-
chore,

The music often wakes within my breast its olden
flame ;

“ For the rest, all else below, is as altered as my toe,
Whose pirouette pulsating set such multitudes of
men ;

The ballet lasts, indeed, as well as State and Creed,
But, even our goddess Fashion, is no more as she
was then ;

“ Cerise is worn no more; Vauxhall has grown a bore;
The present Bloods are merely muffs; and as for
life like theirs,

Or such as seems more sage in this steam progressive
age,

I would think no more of living with them than of
saying prayers.

“ But how, Oh, W——, for double me 'tis true,
You never were, although your cash winged many
months away,

How get you on above, my reckless *rous* love—

Before you go, just tell me what's now *your* vocation,
pray ?”

“ Why, *ma chere*, I run the pace with the present
living race,”

Said the Skeleton; “ but, not exactly as we used
to do ;

London's greater and more gay now, than ever in our
day,

And, so long you've been a fixture, would be hardly
known to you ;

“ For myself, I live afresh, now the devil with the flesh
Has departed, my existence has quite spiritual
become ;

I'm an instrument, in short, now of science, not of
sport ;

And, passing time, not badly, in a comfortable room.

“Do some service to my nation in the way of demonstration—

As a model of the miracles of osseous design—
More respectable, at least, than at the Pharo's feast,
To grin a doubtful moral on the joys of love and
wine.

“But, bless my senses seven! why, already 'tis
eleven,'”

He added, while the clocks beat out the hour with
dismal din.

“And so great is my esteem for our friend, I could
not dream

Of his being at the trouble to get up and let me in;

“So I'll only drop a card on some others in the yard—
Metaphorically speaking—as, for instance, at this
tomb,

Where lies a fellow who once won of me at loo—
But no matter; after death all loss is equalised in
doom;

“Jack Hazard, my dear lad, it's impossible, by Gad,
In your neighbourhood to be, without asking how
you do;

Rain now makes your only pool; death, scarce other
change; for, cool

In life, though not so green as any cucumber were
you :

"How fare you now, my buck?" "Just as ever was my luck,"

Growled the other from the narrow hollow in cavernous tones;

"With pigeon and with rook, throughout life the dice I shook—

But now, though nothing else is mine, I can't even shake my bones."

"I'll just make another call, though it somewhat stirs my gall,"

My friend remarked, and slowly paced a narrow path that led

To a corner of the ground, where, instinctively, he found

A headstone, with an effigy peculiar at its head.

I thought he would have spoke, but was silent. Then there broke

Through the humid mould and nettles, a voice, cavalierly hoarse,

"Damme, but I'm glad to hear that step of yours so near,

For the century's complete, sir, since I cut you down—a corse;

"At the 'Cocoa Tree' that row ended badly, anyhow, But, the death stab wasn't yours, sir, as it afterwards came out;

Faith, it makes old Jack Ketch shake, that he hanged
you by mistake—

But such accidents have often happened from a
drinking bout.

“At any rate, my young Blood, the other party swung,
If that is any consolation, and he yonder lies;
Juries and judges, then, drank as much quite as the
men

They tried; but your case was entirely scandalous—
dash my eyes.”

“Come,” said the skeleton, “our visits now are done,
To-night at least.” And so we paced into the foggy
street,

Where, finding “Twelve” was nigh, we walked so
hurriedly

That when we came to Cheapside, even my comrade
cursed the heat.

There, stopping at a stand, he called a Hansom, and,
Shaking me by the hand, bade me courteously
“good night!”

Off rolled the vehicle—I stood fixed as by a spell,
Until my student-friend awaked me, calling for—a
light!

Estaia.

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED DRAMA.

SCENE.—A Greek island.—Agathon walking on the sea-shore.—
Evening.

AGATHON.

THE wind sobs through these fresh, green summer
trees,
Sad, dusk, and humid, after a day of rain,
As I arrive those sandbanks where the breeze
Breathes salt from sulken sunset o'er the main
Pale—mingling into endless air; and strain
My eyes unto yon isle near the first star,
Whence came aged legends and sweet melodies
Of time, and heroes who immortal are
In realms beyond the West. These fed my years
With marvels, as by the young dawn I moved,
Fancy-enchanted, ere the hour I loved
Estaia, who that distance now endears
And saddens—young Estaia, whose home,
Unseen, is yonder by the headland's foam;
Whose beauty—bosom, eye, and cheek—still glows
In me, as when my heart—a summer rose—
Felt but love's sunshine, knew not yet love's
tears.

Why did I voyage to Naxos, so to lose
The precious light and peace which once were mine?
Yet, should a god restore them, I'd refuse
This sweet and bitter sadness to resign;
For is not Love divinest of divine
Deities—albeit by a fate as blind
Shadow-crossed ever, as he leads us on
To hopeless heavens? I look to the sea-line
I ne'er may cross, and feel the assurance true—
Oh, Love! there is no joy supreme but thine;
Though storm so often wraps from day thy sun,
Whose cloudless course through heaven is known to
few.

And yet, the years before I saw thy shrine—
Where every hour as incense burns away
My life—were sweet, from poem and from play,
Star-thronged with thoughts of minstrels, and of
gray

Sages who knew the soul :—hid in my vest,
Like birds Olympian clustered in a nest,
Pacing the morning sea-banks, or the crest
Of yon fair hill, to which the moon seemed nigh,
They bore me from the present, through the past
To dwell with glorious shapes of Destiny :
Beauty and Terror were my company,
And music of the thunder and the blast,
Or such as fancy hears from the gold vast

And twilight's star. The young, low morning's song
Aroused me from soft dreams : at noon I lay
Leaf-shadowed by the waters of some bay,
The playmates of its naiads ; or, ere gray
Of evening, through some still, celestial wood
Clothing the hills like golden clouds along
The glowing line of autumn's sunset flood,
With charmed step moved in their light and song—
Alone with Beauty. Was this a higher life,
With thoughts of the great dead, the sun and sea,
To live—a portion of eternity,
Inspired, exalted—than with the self strife
Of pitiless passion hung 'twixt heaven and hell !—
No : having loved, whate'er may come is well :
So much is gained I knew not heretofore—
A dream divine and living, which no scroll
Of poet-god, with wintry fables hoar
In lightning felt, could waken in my soul :
A beauteous relic, broken, and yet whole,
Whose very voidness whispers still to me
An echo winged from rich immensity,
Like a sweet shell washed from the furthest shore.

But, while I muse, the world has darkened ; round
The ocean thunder-clouds brood, black and low—
An awful stillness ; through which comes a sound
As of some god on unknown purpose slow
Arising ; and my blood, whose sometime flow

Was melancholy sweet,—like waters blown
Backward from some calm shore by a land storm,
Levelled and blackening toward the deep—has grown
Shrunk with sudden dread of being alone.
Through night I only hear far ocean's moan.
Has hell usurped the air? What is that Form
Approaching,—an impenetrable gloom
Her pathway?—lightning furies round the head
Flashing her thoughts of rage—eyes like the dead,
Vacant, yet pitiless—a shape of Doom—
She comes: the near earth trembles to her tread—
Tisiphone!

TISIPHONE.

'Tis I: fear not my look,
Though mortals into ashes it has strook:
I come to blast you not, but to inspire
Your ignorant spirit with my furious fire,
Whose influence you can resist no more
Than the eye lightning, or your ears the roar
Of Zeus's o'erhead thunders in the void.

AGATHON.

What is your will?

TISIPHONE.

That which your own must be;
Hate wingèd till your enemies are destroyed.
Your love Estaia—ere the morrow's sea

Darken, she will have left her island home
With Ageus. Now you strike despairingly
Your brow with hands which should be drenched in
gore!

AGATHON.

My soul is maddened;—yet, what would avail
This sudden vengeance irresistible,
When even, alas! with swiftest speeding gale
My boat could ne'er arrest this purpose fell?
Had I a cloud, and lightning for a sail—
But that's impossible;—and now, even now,
In the dread presence of that kindling brow,
My reason rising deems that love forsworn
Is love to me no more than ere 'twas born.

TISIPHONE.

It is her father's will—Estaia loves you still—
Now dread you Ageus' ravishing blood to spill?—
What! shall that maiden, beauteous as the air
Of odorous summer, true as she is fair,
Through indolence of yours, beneath disdain,
Link her young loving beauties with her bane,
In some far sea-divided isle, and bear
Curses for children, doomed of hell for e'er;
Turning two lives to one eternal pain?—
Wrap your soul in my wrath and snap the snare
Which an hour hence may have fallen—slay, slay,
slay—
Fill with my fires your being.

AGATHON.

I obey;
Great goddess, awful now no more, with thine
My life is mingled—speed me o'er the brine.

TISIPHONE.

Away!—in a whirlwind we shall scour the flood;
When next you kneel to me 'twill be in blood.

(*Storm. They vanish.*)

A Greek Song.

I.

BEFORE the dawn is bright,
While Phosphor white
Above the low wave rosyng silently,
Watches the stars of night
Fade in the airs above;
Led on by sweet, sad love,
Oh, Echion, I revisit here your new
Cenotaph in this grassy garden by the sea,
To crown with April roses, and to strew
The marble with those blue
Violets, like the eyes beloved by me,
And sing the songs that once were sweet to you.

Behold the gift, O Star, and bear
The echoes of the voice you hear
Unto my lover dear;
If yet, maychance, upon the wave your ray
Should light his barque in mornings far away.

II.

Already it is night,
And Hesper bright
Looks tearfully above the sunset red,
And throng the heavens with light;
As, once again forlorn,
Hither I come to mourn,
Oh, Echion, by your memorial tomb—
For, with the day, alas! my hope is fled:
Not now to scatter bloom
Of promise, but in gloom,
Thus offering my hair unto the dead,
Sing my sad heart away. O Star, become
A light in Hades dim,
Say, mournful orb, to him
Waiting at ocean's rim;—
Thus Love lays down its beauty, ere its breath
Follows the shadow that it loves—to Death!

Winter-Day Dream of a Student.

Of a gray January day I stand
In the keen breeze above the drear, reef-ridged
strand ;
Low clouds ragged with rain drift o'er the
land ;
But, past the stretches of foam-slubbed
sand
A light far off, faint fancy's wing entices
Into the deep South, among vales divine
Where smile Hesperian Afric's paradises :

There by a golden-grained, plashing fountain-pool,
bright wine
In gourd, and shell, and chalice glimmers, amid
grasses and deep vine ;
There odorous trailers drape the foliage crescenting
the waters ; there
On aureate salvers flavorous with summer, juiced
fruits flavean
Richly piled in plenteousness autumnal, scent th'
apricious air
That breathes from mountains and white shores, from
azure oceans Odyssean,

Fruits that crescent moons have kissed, upon which,
 nightly sweetening, shone
The ray of Sirius, magic tasting of blue heavens
 remote and rare :—
Then Afric sinks beneath the cloudland, and old
 Greece is there.

Lo ! in the valley round the glimmering pond
Beneath the gracious green-domed sycamores,
Scenting the wind from thousand blossomed
 frond,
Clustered in green lights, many a nymph-like
 shape
Hands round the tangles of the purple grape,
Or pulp of crimson fruit from cream-brimmed vase
Into the fresh-scooped gourd-cup pours,
Where laughingly each beauty touching dips
The whispering rose-leaves of her lips ;
While shells of quiet water in the grass
Reflect the limbs of others as they pass.
Warm blows the low wind from the long-ridged
 cape
Stretched in the level, spacious sea ; and plays
Far off, the sleepy surge round rocky bays—
The sunlight here and there through leafy—
 pillared ways,
Where oft a girl is seen,
White necked, emergent from their airy green,

Or standing by the mossed well at some turn
With bosom snowy as an egret's plume,
Sun-haired, and graceful as the poised vase
That casts her level brow in marble gloom.
Beyond, upon the sunset shore divine,
Resting on mossy roots above the sands,
Looking towards the distant ship-joined lands,
A bacchant group, grape-crowned, with up-raised
hands,
Drain jubilant the cups of sunny wine;
One bird upon the southern wooded cape
Through brown glooms chaunts to the first
planet bright;
And where the sunken sunset richly shrouds
The main, lo! 'mid the glowing spaces of the
clouds
Heaped westward, many a god and glorious
shape
Is seen to move, or slumber in the amber light.
An olive thicket clothes the lower vale
Recluse and sweet; where leafy, spring-fed
shades
Clustered with numerous dense-winged nightin-
gale,
What time the shoreward fisher furls his sail,
And Hesper quickens as the glory fades,
First yields a broken music to the glades,
Then strengthening, bursts in palpitant roulades.

At times, as evening dusks, the ocean's moan
Remote, and, near, the river's wogling tone,
Sliding past oak-root, over brown, mossed stone,
Upon the airy stillness spreading lone,
Makes heard amid the hush its wat'ry monotone.
And on the hills are towns white-walled and
strong,

Temples of eloquence, pictured life and song,
Regions of coast and woodland rich and
gracious ;

Broad-lands of heroic men, bright and undaunted,
Islands of peace, where Greece's golden daughters
Dance by the marble fanes as music sounding
Enchants the soul and sense with dreams elysian :
Then, like a light upon far fields, the dream is
gone !

And all around me dark and dreary is this
norland vision :

Remote, the sullen headlands, stormy fronted,
The gray foam-billow'd ocean rolling spacious,
And from the bleak waste shelterless, resounding
Ceaseless, the dull, deaf, raging roar of labouring
waters.

Pan.

I.

As the noon sunshine of an old Greek summer
Pours over coasts of mountain, stern and sterile,
And rivered valleys, backed by keen, gray summits,
White-pillared towns, and islands bowered in vine-
yard,
Their gentle guardian god—a lithesome image,
Clear-eyed, with ample wisdom-throned forehead—
Moves soft by wood and fount and watery meadow,
Voicing from rural pipes an airy music,
And joyous with an universal love.

II.

Often at morn, by ivy-hedged orchard,
Unseen, he pipes to cottage children gathering,
'Mid babble sweet and laughter innocent,
The round, night-fallen apples, dewy red :
Unseen at noon, beneath the limes' green arches,
Pours to the swarming bees that throng the blossoms,
Long, sunny hours, mellifluous melodies ;
While dizzy midges follow in a crowd ;
While on the valley stream, the swan flock floatings,

Sumptuous above their snowy-mirrored shadows,
And on the forest top a bird of summer,
Till then the minstrel of the solitude,
Pause in the calm to hearken.

III.

Now by some airy shoreward steep at even
His reed resounds above the silent ocean,
Faint-ridged with gold ; charming the wave-worn
vessels,
Anchored in glassy coves, and others oaring
Sunward, amid the lustrous watery calm :
Or near a graceful group of village maidens,
Couched by cold font or willowy margined river,
Sleeking the milky udders of the kine,
His kindly music trembles through the twilight,
By eve's first star illumined, and for slumber
Collects the flocks, with dewy herb replete.

IV.

Oft from the crest of a high citadel,
Guarding a pillared town, his genial presence
By some lone votary is recognised
In days succeeding victory—hours of peace ;
When chiefs, illustrious in Laconian purple,
Chariot along the winding river's banks
At sunset, their proud-paced, snowy steeds,

Matched to the brazen pole, in dust and thunder ;
And from the shrines the sacrificial smoke
Perfumes the golden light with frankincense ;
While multitudes, white-robed and jubilant,
Gather by grove, on roof and temple step :
Then, in the clear air, o'er the shining city,
With the god's music mingles their acclaim.

V.

But, frequentest of all, the god is seen
At lonely eve, when the good hamlet folk
By grassy altar offer sacrifice.
Oh ! then, as toward the consecrated fire
The milk-white lamb advances dumb, the while
The olive-crowned crowd, slow following,
Chant music-prayers amid the dusk to Pan—
To purify their fields, protect their bounds,
To deepen on the plains the yellow corn,
To throng the orchard boughs with apples red,
The vines with clusters gold and black, and strew
The forest floor with acorns for the swine,
Thicken the warm wool on the fattened sheep,
And, on long winter nights, make glad their hearths,
Plenteously blazing with the high-heaped pine ;
Then to some clear-voiced throng of mountain
 nymphs,
Dancing, quick-footed, by dark watered spring,

Or in some meadow cool, retired, he comes,
Wind-like, through tufts of hyacinth, and sings,—
Glad echo on the hill-top clapping hands,—
And to the fairest listeners promises
The happy marriage gift, the cot, the cheese,
The little lamb and milk-white ewe: then takes
Across the shadowing world his way unseen
In twilight's drowse, save by the downy owl
Aloft, dim cloistered in some mouldering holm,
Watching the day's red streak with vague, large eyes.

The Mariner's Home.

I.

AN evening, silent as the mountain there ;
And not a fleck of foam upon the sea !
Effie ! bring hither from the room a chair,
And in the sunset sit awhile with me.
So little have I seen or known you here—
For life with me has passed from clime to clime—
'Tis sweet to think my last voyage over, dear,
And I return'd home—home for the last time :

Sweet, too, to see the long light from the glade
Stream round this green shore, levelled from the
west,
And touch your face beneath the ivy's shade
Up-looking at me in this hour of rest ;
And sweet, though sad, to view the shore-side tower
Remote, in whose calm shade your mother sleeps,
As I shall, maychance, in no distant hour,
In hearing of the long surge of the deeps—
Where you, my child, will come, but not alone,
To see our tombs when Sabbath evenings smile,
And say a lingering prayer till light is gone—
Then home. But 'twill be sweet for me, meanwhile,
In hours of calm with you, my little one,
To rest, companioned by some olden book
Her hand has touched, and reading, touch the leaves,
On winter nights, beside the red hearth's nook ;
Thus soothing the poor heart each year bereaves
Of gentle memories, though yearning still
Near it to keep the past, whose morning seas
Ebb far away with blessings on their breeze,
Alas ! beyond the powers of love or will.

II.

Meanwhile, we'll live in this familiar place,
Where you shall grow beside me like a rose
Many a long day yet ; and we will pace

The old love-hallowed walks with our old
 friends,
The winds of the wide sky, the sun that glows,
The woods in bud, or when the autumn strows
 Their leafy ruins where yon rock impends,
And in late June the hawthorn blossom snows
 The narrow path that in the precipice ends;—
 We'll sit beside our stream, which waveward
 wends,
Watching its current flowing brown and clear
Past grassy bank and over foamy weir,
Increasing and decreasing year by year;
Now growing narrow in some sandy hollow,
Along whose banks the restless, tacking swallow,
After some unseen fly eagerly errant,
 From dark to dark veers; and where rooted sedges
 Ever the one way their green dagger edges
Turn, lying smooth upon the glassy current:
Where the broad sycamore and old bending ashes
Let the slanting sunlight slip in flashes
Over the wrinkled waters, as at noon
 A warm sea-wind tosses each full-leaved crown;
Or we will watch the golden, sickle moon,
 With one bright star anear its eastern tip,
From tranquil sunset's sinking blue look down
 Solemnly, where the stream flows slow, and
 spin
The silvered eddies onward from some brown

And boken branch, whose withered fingers dip
Over the rushes of the grassy bank,
And half-drowned flaggers, wavering dim and dank.
Oft, too, as by our cottage windows we
Rest in the dusk, the far sound of the stream
Will bring us blessed voices in a dream
Of airy light and silence, mournfully ;
And the wide murmur of the salt, sad sea,
Entone the memory to shape once more
My wanderings round many a mighty shore.

III.

And here I'll tell you oft of winter nights,
My voyages and disasters on the main,
On which I've sailed from where the polar lights
O'er deserts of perpetual winter reign,
Norward ; to tropic zones of burning blue,
Blown by the animating trade-wind on
The hot equator's cloudy ring unto,
Sickened to silence by the o'erhead sun ;
And from the wide Pacific southward, down
Among the mountain billows off Cape Horn,
And barren seas lit by the Cross and Crown,
And southern snowy shores steep and forlorn—
An un conjectured world walled in by ice ;
And up again through isles of summer day,
Our sails, filled with the off-shore gusts of spice,
From woods whose fruitage bends into the spray—

Regions, where richest colour bathes the plume
Of birds, the heart of shells, and all the flowers :
The bright fish through the air-clear ocean swoom,
The fire-fly flames the heavy-leaved bowers—
Edens of summer's everlasting bloom,
Where the great cedar to the zenith towers,
The savage reigns, the serpent o'er the path
In splendid coils prepares his launch of death,
And o'er the wave the dread tornados loom.

IV.

Yes, from my hut among those lofty rocks,
Where flows our river widening to the bays,
I'll muse, while shadowing autumn's blowing
haze
Floats o'er the changing woods, the plains, the
flocks;
And whence above the distant towered town
I'll watch at eve the casual beaming sun
O'er farms and yellowing roofs of corn stack run,
Touching the topazed windows ; and the old
Gray belfry turret, in whose ivy hoots
The owl at drowsy twilight ; the huge roots
Of the great river-trees, whence the flood-sands
Are washed away ; the fronting rocks like gold ;
And see along the northern level lands
The downward folding glory disappear ;
While airy light and silence cool and near

Settle about me, broken only by
Some ripple of the wandering, brown, clear wave,
Swelled by the swirling freshes from the shore ;
Or mark some fish plump in the shadows sleek,
Or withered, curling leaf, that o'er and o'er
Twirling in piteous sunshine, strikes my cheek.
Here will I live, here work and muse, here pore
Upon the past ; here make my peaceful grave.
With you, my little daughter, to adore,
Pass tranquilly my last few lessening morrows ;
And in this brown old cottage by the shore
With love cheer old land griefs and old sea sorrows.

.

July Rain.

ALL through the many-houred
Close midsummer day
The rains, from ocean risen, have showered
From a sky of gray.
We have fed, and talked, and read
Indoors ; and o'er the bay
Expectant from the window look
For a parting ray

Redly piercing through the west,
Ere the great sun goes to rest—
As we soon : but deeper grows
The gloom ; and ever fuller flows
 Through dripping trees, the brook.
Once, though drear, it seemed to clear :
But now the rain falls thick again,
And only scents of flowers that close
 In darkness blind, drift on the wind,
Like earliest dreams from night's repose.

Come, ere we call for candles, play
 A song or two to harmonise
 With those humid odours of the skies,
And tune the nerves, depressed by this long, rainy day.

Song.

WHAT A FAERY SEES.

PERCHED upon a sprig of grass,
I watch the gnats and midges pass
In airy sunset, full of glee,
Talking and singing boisterously :
 While, beneath my comrades twain,
Are sporting—Bliff, whose yellow ears

Are like an open pair of shears,
Cross-legged on a leaf of clover,
Watches Fliz, who, headlong over
The pure, dazzling drop of rain,
In the centre tumbles, getting
Now and then a right good wetting ;
After which he shakes his furs,
Crowing, perched upon one leg ;
Then makes, with all his might and main,
From leaf to leaf, a leap again.

And, roofed in grass, a god's-cow purs,
With eyes half-closed, enjoying there
The slanting light and scented air,
And watching drowsily the burrs
Of floating thistle. On her egg
A black and glossy beetle sits ;
Young, giddy swarms of flies by fits

Twist overhead, white, gray, and red,
Laughing as if they'd lost their wits,
As they look back in sunset's flame
On one who follows cross and lame ;

And hardly have they by me sped,
When under yon enormous branch
Of honeysuckle, I behold
An insect—I forget his name—
Upon a flower floss heap unrolled,
With puss-like paw and labouring haunch.

And gray, declined, earnest head,

Make in a withered leaf his bed ;
While near at hand his rustic dame,
Feeds her young, who, as they cranch
Bits of bruised seed and dry
Films of choice sap, innocently
On their hinds legs couched—are told,
“ If they would get the dewy, wet
Drop of honey sweet, she bakes
On a cowslip leaf, in cakes,
They must sit there as good as gold.”

Poet and Sage.

P.

Now the orb of twilight rises
O'er the dusky, songless vale,
Where the quiet hamlet listens
To the distant nightingale,
In the loneliness delighting,
'Mid the stillness spreading pale.
Thus should the poet live recluse ;
Thus his melodious vigil keep :
A bird that wakes with evening's star
His music, while all others sleep.

II.

Lo ! the full moon o'er the ocean
Sheds a clear and tranquil light,
Governing its mighty pulses
Round the earth by day and night—
Source of movement, source of lustre,
Reigning from the azure height.
Thus should the Sage's thoughtful spirit,
Sphered above the stormy strife,
Lighten, while it sways the currents
Of our planet's circling life.

Song

I.

SOME through sunny life are moving,
Shadowed by its distant goal ;
Some exhaust in pleasure-loving
All the glories of the soul.
Not with brightest cups and clusters
Shall we waste a shortening road,
While above, eternal lustres
Light us from the heavens of God.

Nor, though near, the gloomy portal
Yawns to take our little breath,
Shall we measure shapes immortal
By the skeleton of Death.

II.

With the chances past us flowing
Let us mould our destiny ;
Hopes still round our path are growing ;
Cares but strengthen us and die ;
Death and time, which leave us lonely,
Kill not love, while tears that start
Like the cavern's drop, have only
Graven experience on the heart.
Yet though sweetest sorrows woo us,
Cheerfulness is more divine ;
Though the willow bend unto us,
We will couch us by the vine.

III.

With the vast of God above us,
And the gracious earth below,
Toward that home of souls which love us,
Past the sunset, let us go :
Spirit-like through life's disasters,
Bravely tread the darkest ways,
Ever working to be masters
Of the distant, golden days.

For though present pleasures cheer us
Future joys are grander far ;
Though the glow-worm sparkle near us,
We will turn unto the star.

Arabs of Time.

“ YOUTH and maiden, crowned with rose,
Whence have ye wandered ? ” “ Whence the wind
blows.”

“ Whither advance ye ? ” “ Where the sun glows.”

“ Where is your bright home ? ” “ Nobody knows ;
Fancy is ours, and love and song,
As heart by heart we wander along.”

“ Youth and maiden, ye who seem
Simple and bright as the wandering beam,
Say, sweet Beings, what may you deem
Of this little life of passion and dream ? ”

“ What is the world we wander through ?
A grave ? a sphere of mournful hue ?
Or a palace roofed with gold and blue—
A temple reared for the good and true.

- “ And what is this life that unaware
We wake unto?—a prison lair?
A battle-plain to do and dare,
And reach the summits crossed with care?
- “ Ah! life is a cot on a lonely lea,
From out whose little window we
Catch some faint glimpse of the shining sea,
And golden shores of eternity.
- “ When opes the year we take the charm
Of rural days by field and farm,
When over leagues of pasture warm
The spring cloud stretches a rainy arm.
- “ And when along the streamlets flow
The gelid moons of April glow,
We watch the blue hills shine in snow,
The violet round the oak-root blow.
- “ By sweet rose-thicket and garden-mound
We rest, when summer in splendour drowned,
Swings o’er the perfume-breathing ground,
Her aureate censer, burning round
- “ With odours through the long-drawn day;
Nor care how old Time rolls away,
Dreaming beneath the sultry gray,
On yellowing heaps of fragrant hay.

“ On autumn days through woods we tread,
Mournfully musing over the dead,
Whose smiles we see in the evening red,
With love in our hearts and heaven o’erhead.

“ Oh! far away from the cold world’s sight,
By a fire of leaves in the forest night;
A flask of wine makes fancy bright,
As we revel and sing in its faery light:

“ No king we serve or sage who shone
By stately shrine or golden throne,
Our hearts are all the guides we own,
And poets are our kings alone.

“ Thus as we wander on we win
A radiant sphere, which ’mid the din
And clangour of a world of sin,
Still rounds its orbit from within.

“ Ours is all Beauty which this bright
Domain reveals to thought and sight;
By day the guest of the golden light,
The first star shuts our eyes at night.

“ Ever awake with the dawn, whose glow
Hallowed our cradles long ago;
Ever asleep with the stars that slow
Over our tomb in time shall go.

"As thus 'mid visions, mournful or gay,
Wend we up the eternal way,
Still to the Ruler of Worlds we pray
That we may die the self-same day,

"Like twin birds that heaven designed
To sing and voyage, free as the wind ;
Like twin birds whose sepulchre shrined
In moss and foliage none may find ;

"Through friendly seasons toward our goal,
Through leaves and snows and winds we roll,
On to the star-bright heavenly pole,
On to the Country of the Soul.

"Where is our home, then, would'st thou know ?
Not in the world's vain realm of show ;—
'Tis in our *hearts*, twin hearts that glow
Through day and dark wherever we go.

"Traveller, adieu ; across the wide,
Strange realm of passion, care, and pride,
Like evening shadows side by side,
On to the world of light we glide.

Traveller, adieu ; life rises o'er
The round of earth, like morning hoar
That springs from the dark to sink once more
To its golden rest on the starry shore."

Mosses and Grasses.

I.

I HAVE a picture in my room,
One of the dead, beloved and lost ;
It looks at me through morning's gloom,
Through the dumb, dizzy calm of noon,
And when the twilight clouds drift past,
The silver shores of the stormy moon.
Around the casement where I rest,
Old flowers and shrubs she loved have grown ;
Their shadows in the light of the west
Waver and nod, as the wind o'er me,
From the low-laid evening hill is blown,
And the first full star floats up the sea.
And here I think in the low twilight
I see thee wandering on the strand
Of thy new home this purple night ;
And beckoning through the shadowy screen
Of space, with a pure, moonlit hand
Toward where I am and thou hast been.

II.

Oftimes I leave my lone abode
To breathe the air amid my dreams,
To pace some solitary road,
And ponder o'er eternal themes ;

And, pausing by the moonlit tree
 Above the blue drift of the river,
 Stand and think that silently
 She wanders by my side for ever.

Oft, by the morning casement chill,
 I think, as I look through the blind half drawn,
 That o'er the mild slope of the hill
 I see her face amid the dawn :
 And from the rivulet below,
 Her gentle voice seems murmuring near,
 When my heart is in my happy ear,
 And the early wind is breathing low.

Blue April comes with soft moonlight,
 And leafy wind and humid star ;
 The saint-like clouds, all pure and white,
 Look from the midnight heavens afar.
 Then in the casement's dusky rest,
 And on the streams of air that roll
 From yon star o'er the mountain's crest,
 I hear her whispering to my soul.

III.

Let years roll on, the happy past
 Shall make my sweetest pleasure here ;
 Old love, enough for me, shall last,
 And with it all my heart holds dear :

Still thou shalt watch me from the height
Of yonder death-deep, azure skies,
Dear soul, a fond and faithful light,
Though all unseen of these dim eyes ;
While lapped in heart trance, night by night
I'll gather olden days to me,
And soothe my evening with thy light,
Life rounded moon of memory.

IV.

It is a dim gray, Sabbath day ;
The prayer-bell rings, the wind is low ;
And the dear tomb to which I stray
Is dim with mist and ledged with snow.

I think of thee, I pray for thee,
Dear friend, now lying calm below ;
I know not whither thou art gone,
And that I love thee, all I know.

The Sabbath days are all I own
To bring thee to my heart of woe,
To call thy face up all alone,
And dream of dear times long ago.

Oh ! well I feel, couldst thou come near
And heal this heart of thy death blow,
Thou'd leave the heaven to dry my tear,
Nor wish return and leave me so.

But God, whose will is perfect love,
Between us makes the space-seas flow,
And hangs the barrier'd stars above
To shut the dead from worlds below :

Once feared I—but fear thou not, dear—
Sorrow would weep the memory blind,
That love with time would lessen here,
And active days leave grief behind.

But, ah! dear angel, never more
Comes on this earth pure joy to me,
But on that far eternal shore
Still grows and hoards itself with thee.

V.

When spring floats up the seas, and while
The fresh airs soothe the sense, once more,
In the blue light of April's smile,
I pace the promontory's shore ;
Where many a day with friendly books
We breathed the peace of ocean's noon,
Till high in dreamy dusk, the rooks
Pushed woodward, and the brightening moon
Rounded above the cloudy wave :
The distant lighthouse glimmered red ;
Beneath, the billow swamped the cave,
And under the gray sunset dead,

The bell tolled from the inland dark ;
At times came voices from the main,
At times remote the watch-dog's bark.
No change is here but in the brain
And heart, where many a year has flown
Without thee, on the summer earth,
Where nature now seems bright alone,
And by the silent winter hearth :

Here, as with many memoried heart
I trace our green walks by the shore.
I pause, to pray for thee apart,
To call thee to my side once more ;
For well I know, hadst thou the power,
Thou'dst leave the brightest heavenly sphere
To see me but for one brief hour,
To comfort me left lonely here.
Well, it is something still to dream
In nature's silence by the bay ;
Again, recalling love, to seem
Living with thee this one brief day,
Which now haze-wildered, swift and low
Sinks to the sea in mournful gloom,
While gusts of wind from the gray glow,
And passes moaning toward thy tomb.
I turn my back upon the hill
Fate beckons me to other lands
Night spreads before me wide and chill—
A lonely moon and endless sands.

VI.

It is a quiet, lonely day,
A summer Sunday sweet and long ;
The sky is scarfed with clouds of gray,
The trees are full of simple song.

Ah ! many a day like this we've trod
The leafy path beside the river,
Two silent souls, and prayed to God
That our old love might last for ever.

How oft on evenings gone by,
In stilly hours of joy and rest,
We sate within the casement high,
And gazed into the yellow west :

And musing, heard a mournful sound
Funereal, float along the river,
And die above the cypress'd mound
That closed thee from my sight for ever.

THE GRAVEYARD.

I.

ALL the day he tarried
Through its light and gloom,
Where his heart was buried
In a dear one's tomb ;—
'Tis its earthly place of resting till the judgment
doom.

II.

Whispering in the breeze
Stand the trees he planted ;
'Tis alone by these
That the place is haunted—
Slender crimson-berried ashes, all the guard that's
wanted.

III.

Many a prayer he's muttered
O'er its silent dust,
To God his dear hopes uttered,
To them, his love and trust,
Now, and when we tread the lands where time no
more can rust.

IV.

Brightly the sun appears
Over the dead to-day ;
As bright shall come the years
When he has passed away :
So for the souls he loves, his soul shall ever shine
and pray.

V.

air is full
and faint,

That swoon awhile, and lull,
 Like memories of a saint—
 The sound of withering sycamores, the late bird's
 lonely plaint.

VI.

The dull stone clash of spades
 Heaving the dry earth down,
 The wind that stirs the blades
 Of grass and tree grown brown,
 And noises on the stillness ebbing from the distant
 Town.

VII.

The level waves of day
 Are sinking down the west,
 Through vistas golden gay
 Of dark elms old at rest,
 Weep the trickling autumn leaves upon each silent
 breast.

VIII

Along each cypress row,
 Stirred by the phantom breath,
 Th' unearthly sunset's glow
 Flames as it sinks beneath—
 So toward their resting-place, shall turn his heart
 in life and death.

IX.

As firmly stands that tomb,
 Through wind and winter's snow,

In hollow midnight's gloom,
In morning's stormy glow ;
So stands his strong heart by their love through
seasons of wild woe.

X.

Oh, dark and mournful cave !
Oh, holiest abode !
Oh, lonely blessed grave !
Near it he's nearer God,
And from its gray and silent home, to heaven spreads
his road.

MORNING.

WILDLY and clear breaks the blue morn,
O'er uplands ridged with springing corn ;
The pale sun lights the ivied wall,
And glimmers on the moss-roofed house,
That like a numb bird seems to mourn
Upon the lonely wold forlorn,
Standing amid a tree or two,
Beside the marsh stream, bleak and blue.
The rooks from the bare elm-tops call ;
The bare, brown woods waver their boughs
To and fro. and rest and rouse
Piteous and drear, along the croft ;
e taper poplar tremble aloft ;

And in the meadowy stretch aloof,
Half veiled in their frosty breath,
Anear the farmyard, browse the kine,
Where, ruffled in the shadow wind,
The puffed fowl feed with querulous whine;
The dim grass shivers on the roof;
The plain spreads, light and shade in line.
Seldom and faint a dismal ray
O'er the dumb distance—low, gray hill
And wood-skirt—passes vague and still,
All through the wide, uncertain day.

EVENING.

Slant strikes the windy sunset's glare
From the sad, green upland meadow,
Through a scattered sky of rain.
The wat'ry flame across the room
Tinges with fire the leaden gloom,
And wavers on the wall the shadow
Of the dim shrubs by the pane.
Along the hill the gusty heather
Shivers in th' uneasy air;
The sun, amid a wildering haze,
Drops through the wild evening weather
Toward the sea in cloud and blaze;
And pales the wat'ry moon on high.
Without, the wistful flies in care

Creep slow along the trickling glass,
Or thinning, wheel on the damp wind,
That through the leaden twilight bare,
Shivers beside the casement blind,
Like a chill beggar. Then the sky
Grows heavy, for a night of rain.

APRIL.

Now from the last of winter skies,
Melts the frost-rosed cloud away.
And dewy April seems to rise
Out of the clear, soft close of day.
The violets round the oak-root peep
At morn in cosy nooks again,
The spring airs breathe from the soft deep,
And fair clouds dome the pastured plain.
White sea-birds poise above the capes,
And o'er their misty marges shine ;
While on the shore-slopes' snowy shapes
Are feeding daisy-breathing kine :
And by the tomb a blossom shows
Its opening beauty as I stray ;—
Thus love, that living, bends and glows
Above a dear one passed away ;
Is like this sweet, memorial rose,
That guards a grave-stone still and gray.

'Tis sweet spring eve in the old elm wood :
The trees light up in the amber glow,
The ruin under its ivy hood
Looks out to see the cowslips blow :
In quiet sleeps the distant flood ;
Steadily homeward sails the crow,
And up and down the rain-dark road
Figures are passing to and fro.
Westward, whence the wind is blowing,
Round the shoulder of the hill
Comes the scent of ocean flowing,
Through the evening blue and chill.
Then drops the crimson sun behind
The wooded isles, and glimmeringly
The stars shine peaceful, as the wind
Goes out with the dim evening sea.

HYMN OF COMFORT.

In the sunlight there are forms
Viewless, shadowless, but seeing,
Thronging round us in life's storms :
Space and light are full of Being ;
In the distance there are voices,
Happy when the heart rejoices ;
Mournful when in hours of trial
We taste the purifying phial.

Hopeful, cheerful, then abide thee,
For when thou art loneliest seeming,
Loved old Natures live beside thee
Glimpsing through thy soul in dreaming.
When at the deserted window,
In the sad, lone eve you rest,
Spirits look from out the distance
Through the spaces of the west :
When at the lone hearth thou sittest,
One who filled the empty chair,
O'er which old firelight thou flitest,
Looks at thee in silence there ;
Hears thee, though thou never wittest
Breathe dear names in loving prayer—
Prays with thee to soothe thy care.
Then remember when we suffer,
Something heavenly lives to guide us ;—
God is ever overhead,
And the viewless Lost—beside us.

Old Lyrists.

A GLANCE AT HERRICK,

As amid the magic mountains,
Spired above the golden woods,
Slender shafts of sprayey fountains,
Pulse in gentle, singing floods—

Sparkling out in starry legions,
Through each dusky forest knoll—
Little songs of love and folly,
Careless ditties pure and quaint,
Witching wild, or breathing faint,
Of meditative melancholy—
Freshen the dramatic regions
Of our Shakspeare's spacious soul.

Oft some genial spright like stilly
Moonlight through the pages strays
Of Fletcher, Beaumont, Ben and Lilly
When they sing amid their plays;—
Happy memories, gentle fancies,
Culled from the tracts of genial days,
Mingling in their Muse's vase,
Like violets and golden panseys.

Herrick's ditties, rich and simple,
Shine in joyous lights divine,
Like the bubbles bright that dimple
O'er some bowl of evening wine,
Drank at sunset windows facing
Fields of bounteous harvest, where
Merry groups are homeward pacing
Through the yellow evening air.

An old brick manse stands by the wood,
Its antique porch and mossy vanes,
And casements looking east and west,
Crannied with many an old brown nest,
And shielded by their ivy hood
From summer's sun and winter's rains.
'Tis Herrick's house, his singing cage,
His meditative parsonage.

Here oft of spring dawns, rosy frore
Ere the blithe sower throng begin
To sift with grain the fields once more,
A radiant rainbow arching o'er
The space betwixt the woods and shore
Relumes his breast with dreams of peace
On earth, and bounteous sweet increase;
And fixes calm his genial eyes
'Mid tears of worship on the skies;

Here oft at noon, far from the din
Of city streets, he loves to pour
O'er mildewed tomes of antique lore;
Here when at eve he opes his door
The evening star looks in.

Outside his pane each autumn dawn
Upon the sloping, grassy lawn,
The sunshine waits his waking
And frolics round the ivied eaves,
And through the porch's jessamine leaves
In the soft south wind shaking;

Where often lapt in light he rests,
Maychance expectant of his guests,
Viewing beneath the glow of morn
The cattle by the blossomed thorn
Lie ruminating in the cool :
The horses drink beside the pool,
The cherries glow by fields of corn,
By rivers the long fields grow yellow :
 And pendent from their airy screen,
 In leafy alcoves dusky green,
The clustering chestnuts brownly mellow :
And later on the meadowy mound,
 As under trees the reapers dine,
The singing hamlet girls sit round
 And ply the udders of the kine ;
While sails a crow athwart the light,
 And vanishes on ebon vans,
While butterflies of blue and white
 Flutter about like fairy fans,
And through the honeysuckles nigh
A bee is humming drowsily ;
On which he pencils swift a verse,
Volant as one, as the other terse,
 Whose every line and couplet sings,
As in the soft wind leaf to leaf ;—
A fancy bright and careless brief,
 Which might be penned upon their wings.

Then to his orchard for a walk
At sunset, and a charmed talk
With his own fancied thoughts, which swarm
Under his brows, assuming form
From casual rays or painted flowers
In attitudes of varied grace ;
From apple blooms, and corner bowers,
And all the wonders of the place—
Till at the rustic gate remote
Appears a cherry ribbon gay
Fluttering beside a beauteous face,
And a puffed silken petticoat
Coquettish sailing down his way ;
And Julia meets him pacing there,
Black-eyed and fresh with the bloom o' the air,
Amid the rosy glow divine,
With ozier basket white and clean,
With cakes from town and garlands green,
And simple cruise of cowslip wine.
Oft when October's even falls
Along the hills and windy bay,
And seeded grass and heather bell,
Shiver around the wayside well,
And rabbits feed in silence gray,
And chaffers chirp on shingly walls,—
The while he roves in twilight's swoon
Moorward beneath the struggling moon,—

Lo! wild wee shapes with eyes of blue,
Foot the dim fern-mounds, soft as dew;
And oft in-doors of winter nights,
When rounds the snow-star towards the seas,
And glimmer the quaint taper lights
O'er wainscottings and tapestries;
While silent spreads the cold, white earth,
Familiar fairies round the hearth
Frolic, and speed their insect feast.
Before his eye from vellumed book,
Side-glancing with a silent look,
Appears a many a tiny guest;—
One cross-legged on a ring of smoke,
One on his pipe-bowl, ruddy eyed;
Upon the glowering hob a gnome
Acquaint with cricket histories,
And lives of mites in mouldy cheese,
And spells revealed in evening's breeze,
And charms from many a dusky tome
Of entwined ivy; on his knees
One bright fay feather winged with foam,
And one astride the kitten's ears.
Oft too, when comes his poet mood,
As autumn glows with wine the blood,
With goblet silver as a moon,
Brimmed with a draught as cool as snow,
And bubbled like the sprays that flow

Upon the purple seas of noon,
Alone he breathes the warm dusk night,
In honeysuckled casement bright,
With stars whose moving, radiant train
Image the rich thoughts of his brain,
And drunk with fancies, rapture drawn,
Dreams till the night is drowned in dawn.

With poet loves each gay year blows
Love's breathing perfume to the close,
And painless as the thornless rose;
'Mid friendships ever green as laurel,
Bunched with berries red as coral :
Sacred thoughts, like heaven's snow,
Purifying earth below,
Fancy buoyant as the wing
Of skylark soaring in the spring ;
Memory bright as autumn morn,
Glowing over fruits and corn,
Rolls to their end 'mid rural ways,
His genius lighted genial days.

Twilight.

THE rain has ceased, the grayish dusk grows clear,
Through humid silence sounds the wat'ry weir :
Then, as the dusking world sinks into rest,
Lo! Venus flames out of the level west

Golden and mellow :

And in the arbour, sitting still, we hear

The last drops ebbing from the ivied eaves,
And the low night wind shiver

Through the sad sedges and the dropping leaves
September-yellow,
Along the banks of the low, midgy river.

Old Count Ugenstein.

A SCENE IN THE VAUDOIS.

PART I.

THROUGH the autumn's sombre evening air,
Gusting from the sullen sunset's glow,
Toward a graveyard, high amid the glare
Of a mountain country, wide and bare,
Nor'ward girt with woods and crests of snow,—
O'er whose drear demesnes life everywhere
Seems stunned to silence by some mighty blow—

Three horsemen ride : two side by side ;
He with the lead, on a strong, white steed
Dashed on the flank with crispy gore,
Who holds, his saddle-bow before,
A corpse—a Boy they late have found,
Slain in the smoky vale below
Upon the cumbered battle-ground
In the morning's fight—a piteous sight
For such as can see his gold hair flow,
And his dead face white in the slanting light.

One of those behind who ride together
Up the path amid the breezy heather
Is a plumed and armoured knight,
Who holds the bridle of the horse
That bears the Father of the corse :—
An aged man, distract in mind,
Silent, desolate, and blind ;
Who comes at least to weep above
The ruins of his hope and love—
Count Ugenstein ;—whose turrets high
Among the woods and mountains, soon
Fired by the foe, the cloudy sky
Will mirror ere the rise of moon.
As the fierce blaze of sunset plays
Upon them, now as they ascend
The steep path to their journey's end,

Hark ! upon the wildering blast,
In the twilight growing gray,
The old grave-digger's song swoons past
The rocks that skirt the rugged way :—
“ Nature, sooth, befriends our trade
As that of Charon at his ferry ;
But, War ! without you I'm afraid
Poor folk scarce had more to bury
Than would yield them salt and bread,
And we to death himself would fag on,
Pinched with want ; while battle red
Fills the cupboard, fills the flagon,
Makes a palace of the hovel
Where our sceptre is, the shovel ;
And our subjects who have paid us
Their last tax cannot upbraid us
For the obolus which buys us
The strong drink each delver prizes ;
For as damp oft gives the cramp,
And cough that aches the aged head,
Oh ! nothing's better for a whetter
Than good wine, for us whose line
Of life is—burying the dead.”
In the little burial-ground
Rises many a fresh green mound,
By a ruined chapel, wan
As an image of old grief :

Only a casement's skeleton

Standing like a withered leaf,
Through whose threads you see the sky,

Deep and blue, as they can through
The wasted ash that shivers nigh
Yon broken wall, that seems to fall
And rise again as from its knees;

And among the shadowing grasses,
Where the wave-like bending breeze

Sadly o'er their sere tops passes,
A grave behold, brown, deep, and cold,
With its rugged banks of mould.

The group have left their steeds, and one has led
The old man on to where his dear one dead
Must now in haste be buried:

And, spade in hand, the diggers stand,
Awaiting but the knight's command.

"Good, my lord, the moment's come
To place him in the grave; the gloom
Already shrouds the lower land;
And as the foe are on our track,
'Twere well in time to hasten back."

"Then let me take one last embrace,
One last dear kiss from his cold face,
Which I no more can view, than he
That of his aged sire can see.

Alas! that I should ever hold
Thus on the grave-brink dark and cold—

This precipice of eternity—
 My life's last flower and fruit of gold !
 That even here—O misery !—
 Must I for ever part from thee ?
 Still to my heart I hold thee—yes,
 Close to my heart, the while I bless
 Thy love, and curse the destiny
 Which thus has rent thy life from me.

But fate is feelingless, and heaven,
 Which brings the sun to glorify
 The wilderness of earth and sky,
 Is by the ruthless lightning riven—
 Sends the rude storm upon the deep,
 Leaving the wreck-strewn shore to weep—

Without our will it gives us breath,
 Crowning us for an hour with thought,
 Whose sorrowing empire ends in naught ;
 And little else worth thanks, save sleep,

Except its best of guerdons—death.
 Well, take him, as ye must : he's gone,
 And I for ever am alone.

Now let life's joys, which die with him,
 Be even as heaven unto those dim
 Orbs—a huge blank. Now let me share,
 With night, thy company, Despair !”

The wind had risen, and shafts of rain
 Came driving o'er the darkening plain,

Where the heavy lurid roof
Of night, a little held aloof
O'er the dead long sunset red,

Glimmering ghastly far away,
Ere it joined with the black round
Of the distant, desolate ground,

Like the earth's forlorn Last Day.
The old Count knelt upon the clay,
And heard the mould fall heavy on
The vanished figure of his son,
Gazing below with blank intense
Look, strengthened by another sense.

"The grave's filled up, our work is done."

"Lo! night comes on apace, my lord!

The castle's many a mile away—
Back let us ride; and, take my word,

Hither I'll lead thee many a day,
To soothe thy sorrow by the side
Of him who has so bravely died,

And for his soul's repose to pray."

"Ah! but to leave him in the cold

And tempest driving round us!—Heaven,
At least I thank thee I am old!

Come, let's again unto the road,
Where we may chance to meet the foe;—
But yet a little ere I go—

One kiss, O earth, which holds below

My son!" Then plucked a blade or two
Of the dim grass that round it grew;
With trembling hand, in tender quest
Of spot securest, in his breast

Placed it; mounted his steed, and slow

The winding hill descended, till
On heathy levels widening round
They swept in gallop the dim ground.

The storm had risen with the night,
The rolling clouds roofed out the sky,

Tumultuous and starless, save
Where on the hillside of the grave
A red star moved—the delvers' light,

Turned to their home in the vale anigh.
Dark is the world, where they only hear
The roar of woods and waters near.

Miles pass; and now, as from a ravine
They sweep in the blinding blast and rain,
Through which, above the distant plain,

Fire, like a ruining dawn, is seen,
There's a tramp of horse approaching. Lo!
They come—are upon them—the foe, the foe!
The red flame of war lights their swords from afar.
"Yield ye!" "Not so!" Then blow follows blow;
And the blind old man, with a fierce hurrah,
Brand in hand, has mixed in the fray.
But his knights are beneath, on the bloody heath,
And he is alone with his last friend, Death.

PART II.

“ONWARD!” the captain cried; “we’ve lost
More than we reckoned for to-night;
Defeat had tutored them to fight,
And desperately have smote those three,
As we, methinks, know to our cost.”

The troop of horsemen galloped on
With the sweeping wind that roared among
The woods and hills; their trampling rung
Awhile in the dark ravine, where through
The rolling, rainy vapours blew—
Reached a turning, and were gone.

Upon the torn and sodden mould
Eight men lie dead and growing cold;
Darkness and storm awhile pervade
The desolate spot, made darker by
The presence of death’s dreary shade;
Only the wind, so loud on high,
In lessening gusts sweeps sadly nigh
As if to look—then down the glade
Passes slower and pityingly.
But now in the lull comes a long-drawn sigh,

And something stirs, and rising then
Among the corpses of the men—
Stands in the distant-dying flame
Of the castle, and calls his knights by name.
But the silence of earth and the moan of the storm
Alone reply to that blind old form,
Who, with arms upflung, in a mood forlorn,
Totters along, like a Samson shorn,
Where, he knows not, but anywhere
Swift death may swallow up despair.

Wildly along he winds his way,
Swift or slow, as the path may sink
Or rise along the mountain gray ;
Blown about by the blustering stress
Of the maddened gale, but feelingless
Save for the grim desire each next
Dark step may be where some chasm of air
Shall end his pain in nothingness.
Thus, as he proceeds in safety, vexed
At the torture of a Tantalus path,
Which tempts but to turn him off from death.
But yet much longer it cannot be,
He thinks ; and his maddened mood has grown
To one of a strange, wild gaiety,
In which he talks to the winds that brood
Above the roofs of the mountain wood
Amid which now he wanders, lost,
Stumbling against trunks and branches tossed

By the weight of the storm, as a bird with wing—
Broken—amid its buffeting,

Wounded alike by sword and bough,

Drenched with the wet of rain and swamp ;

Yet, in his 'wilderment, pausing now

To mingle his soul's wild sympathies.

With the world-wide wrath, the sonorous pomp,
Of roaring cataract, raging blast,

Amid the gorges antheming

To the unseen powers of the desolate vast,

Which waft their mighty agonies

To perish in the endless skies,

As he, whose soul a thousand fires

Impel to ruin, now desires.

The wood that prisoned him awhile

Is passed, and stronger beats the storm

Upon his dim and desolate form ;

Now trampling through a dark defile

Nigh to the summit of the hill,

Where lightnings flash and torrents dash

From bleak, impending rocks, until—

Darkness and deluge left behind—

The rough path takes a sudden wind,

And the drear moon, risen o'er peaks of ice,

Illumes the old man, tottering blind

On the narrow mountain ledge, where below

Yawns a mighty precipice,

Dark as his fate—deep as his woe.

Unconscious of its terror, lo!

He treads that brink of blackness now—

Totters—stumbles—he is gone

Down the abysm for ever! No!

Stunned by the shock, his figure tall

Lies on the edge of the mountain wall,

Like the crest of surge that hangs on the verge
Of some winter-hardened waterfall.

The eagles, wakened by the gale,

Above him this and that way sail,

With clashing beaks and rigid claws,

In hungry joy; and the wind, grown still

Under the shelter of the hill,

Passes away in lessening swoon

Over the valleys, over the plains

And lowlands flooded by the rains,

Toward the cloud-crossed, dreary moon.

Hours pass over the old man blind,

Living in body, dead in mind,

Stretched on the edge of life, and death

Awaiting him in the void beneath.

But with night the winds have died away,

And, through ethereal glories sailing

Where the morning star is paling,

Goldens wide, blue, peaceful day

O'er glittering snows and glimmering floods,
And withered gold of the autumn woods ;
And now on a little Child who treads
The grassy paths and torrent beds
Of the mountain, slanting a cheerful ray,
 As she plucks the rain-wet flowers, and sings
 A simple song, like the sound of springs
Bubbling up in sunny play ;
Till she comes where the senseless warrior lies—
Starts—stands—draws near, with wild surprise
In her large, blue, innocent eyes ;
 Then bending her gold-curled head to his dim,
 Cold face and forehead, touches him,
And whispers : “ Good old man, arise.”

He awakes from his dream by her touch, like a beam
Of morn, the while his hand she takes,
And with serious care conducts him where
Danger is past, and down the road
Through sunny trees to her sire's abode—
No more the desolate old man, wild
With grief, but, like herself, a child ;
For nature in pity has swept the past
Away from his soul, like clouds on the blast
Of the late dread night, and left him only
 The memories of his morning hours,
 Sunny and fresh, as ere the powers
Of gloomy fate had left him lonely.

And down in the chalet a little while,
Tenderly tended by good folk round,
Lived the old count, relieved of cares,
With his little friend, 'mid songs and prayers;
Till a kindly death, through April airs,
Approached his couch-side with a smile.

Le Tour de Halle—Bruges.

STILL falls the drowsy summer noon
Within the dim, deserted square :
The weak old fountain's querulous tune
Sounds, dozing in the silent glare.
Upon the chimneys rusty-gray
The moulting sparrows twittering sit,
And on the gabled fronts all day
The rays o'er face and carving flit;
And round the window nooks one sees
The dry weeds trailing from the height,
And from the dark, stone balconies
Old hangings drooping in the light :
While, hark ! in th' air rings out a chime
Across the roofs from yonder Tower
A playful prelude with old time
Ere on his heart it strikes the hour.

We pace as in a musing dream
The streets where trade moves lazily on ;
View the old bridge, the sluggish stream,
The slow groups basking in the sun ;
And through the quaint, wide market-place,
Around which blowsed Flemings flock,
Where o'er them in blue skyey space
Looms the cathedral gilded clock :
On eaves the pigeons doze, and flies
The wind through dusty paths away,
And floats the dry haze o'er the skies
All through the still and hollow day :—
While ever again the quarter's chime
Rings from the tall, square Town-hall Tower—
A playful prelude with old time
Ere on his heart it strikes the hour.

Now pause we by a hostel brown,
For many an age the traveller's shore ;
Its roof with foliage overgrown—
Huge, hooded waggons by its door ;
A shadowy house that stood alone,
With long, gray, crumbling balustrade,
And pointed porch of mouldering stone,
And gilded vanes all weather frayed ;
While by the dim walls came and went
A wandering air amid the leaves :
The mouldering wall-flower's rusty scent
Breathed faintly from the silent eaves :

Till o'er the roofs the *carillon* chime
Ripples around the tall, brown Tower,
In playful prelude with old time
Ere from his breast tolls forth the hour.
With huff'd and hazy look the noon,
Perplex'd 'mid blown and scarfing cloud,
Now lets a sunbeam slip, and soon
Remuffles in its vaporous shroud.
Along the rounding levels gleam
The stagnant lengths of dim canal;
The peasant plodding with his team
By brown, sluiced field and crumbling wall,
Hails some barge drawn by horses slow,
Along the poplar-shaded bank,
Past tile-roofed village, trim chateau,
Pale flax-field, willow-covert dank:
And bleating sheep on dusty roads
But break the calm—till from the Tower
O'er Bruges' low remote abodes,
The deep bell sounds abroad the hour.
And now as evening sinks,—and through
A westward rift the sunset pours
On Ostend's steeples, by the blue,
Fresh Channel, and the loamy shores,
Across the fat, flat, cultured land,
Dotted with cities brown and old,
And battle-fields, by labour's hand
Now garlanded with harvest gold—

We pass great churches hushed and dim,
Through whose wide, angeled doors you see
Rich altar-lights, while Vesper's hymn
Floats up the long aisles holily ;
Where through the mists of incense loom
The miracles of pictured power—
As over turret, spire, and tomb
Sounds through the dusk the twilight hour.

Now, toward the low west, far away,
A dark bridge spans the long lagoon,
Whose arched space, yet dim with day,
Glow like a waning, yellow moon :
Above the bastions, green and strong,
The cheery lights begin to flit ;
The sluggish moats that stretch along,
By star and candle spark are lit ;
Beyond the plashy, trenched flats
That toward the sunset blankly lie,
Fantastic windmills spread like bats
Their wings athwart the low, red sky :
'Tis night. Hark to the clocks!—afar
One weak-voiced in some mouldering tower
With age seems doting. Near yon star
The great bell thunders the dark hour.

Morning on the Adriatic.

APPROACHING VENICE.

UP! for the bell of dawn has tolled!
The city's domes have grown to gold,
Against the mists and mountain snows,
Remotely, faintly tinged with rose;
And green wave-ridges risen from sleep,
Landward, freshly foaming, rolled,
Bear us upon the path, the sun
Burns towards us from the eastern deep;
A warm, wide wind, with day begun,
After us into the brown sail blows,
 Heaving us up the long, smooth gorges,
 Undulant over the glad green surges.

On the felucca's deck, with flask,
Olives, and biscuits brown, we bask,
Curtained in canvas nook before
The bickering glory shot from shore;
Inhaling still the faint, far bloom
Of flowering limes, exhaled with dusk,
From gardens where pomegranates rare
Red blossoms waft us their perfume;
The which at times some Asian air,
Warmly mingling sighs of musk,
 Floats o'er the wave, our boat dividing,
 Follows among its foam subsiding.

Evening in the Pyrenees.

THE mule bells tinkle, tinkle ceaselessly,
And in the tranced, tranquil evening glow,
Through cork-woods green, up the hill's side we go,
Leaving beneath the towered town and sea.
Silence and light seem one : no breath comes down
From the sierra's wintry drifts that lie,
White as the bones of kings close to the sky,
In sepulchres supreme of snow, with crown
And sceptre, side-long glimmering goldenly.
From the wide plain that eastward, purple brown,
Dips in dry haze, no pulse of sound is heard ;
And luminous calm accompanies us by
Forests, where birds dream on the boughs unstirred ;
Seaward the blaze grows faint with cloudy sleep,
And the great hills are mute as the great deep.

The mule bells tinkle, tinkle ceaselessly,
And still we mount, as sinks the silent day.
The plain has now become a shadow sea,
Rolled toward the night, and on the level bay
The round sun, resting, seems a bowl of blood,
Reddening the stony paths and aisles of the wood,
As though with murderous memories ; and yon pair
Of convent casements on the ravine's side,
So lately blazing in the wide sea glare,

Are spotted gules, like scutcheons on the wall
Of some old chieftain's ruined mountain hall,
Who at fierce Fontarrabia had died.
And now all's blotted—thicker shadows fall ;
Hark ! 'mid the bells, the tinkle of guitars ;
While, with the sea wind's breath, beat out the stars.

Song.

A GREEK DAWN.

I.

My altar is a mound of turf,
Fresh, dewy in the ocean's gleam ;
 My offering a rose ;
And while as yet faint Phosphor glows,
And sounds the cold dawn's senseless surf,
 I pray, and look toward you,
 Eola, opening eyes of blue
 After a happy dream.

II.

I cannot see your island, sweet,
Its hills lie under the waste deep,

Now goldening out of night :—
O Love! bring what's unseen of sight
Before me with my true heart's beat ;
 Upon the balmy, clear sea-air,
Your breath, that unaware
 Late sighed my name in sleep.

III.

Though in the distance lost, to me
I feel your fond face turned ne'erless :
 Your neck and locks still wet
From the fount's sprays, are set
In the blue, morning loneliness
 Of this calm, radiant hour.
Change, wind! and whisper o'er the sea :—
 "Kissing, I offer thus the flower
Your pillow still may press."

Song.

SORRENTO TWILIGHT.

WHAT though the lark in yonder vale
 Slumbers in its grassy bed,
Still we listen in its stead
To the dusky nightingale:

Hark ! from yonder full-leaved tree,
As the moon comes up the sea,
Streams her dulcet minstrelsy.
Shall we, shall we then repine,
Shall we dream but day divine,
When the bird of fading light
Fills with richer sound the night ?
When for every slumberous rose
Drooped around in dreams supine,
Splendorously a planet glows
O'er our bowls of snow and wine.

floating.

L.

STAMBOUL's domes and fretted spires
Have faded far in luminous air,
Like a rich music, when the full,
Sonorous swell of violins rare,
Bends with the tinkling,
Silvery sprinkling
Intervalling sound of lyres :
And near us hovers some lone gull ;
As down the Bosphorus, our barque
Idle as night, through dreamy dark

Of broad-roofed, blossom'd sycamore,
Floats by the green, leaf-shadowed shore.
So silent are the sea and sky,
We hear each frail, dew-heavy bloom,
Fall through the warm, transparent gloom
Of our high-foliaged canopy.

II.

Eastward, in little coves and bays,
The leafy coast indents and curves,
Dark as an odalisque's wavy tress—
Far from the main, whose current swerves
In serpent sheens,
Like steely gleams
Of sword-blades, in the rising rays,
Whose brilliance now the waves caress;
Then as the steep banks slope to show
Northward remote Olympian snow,
The full moon from the Asian night,
Superb sultana of those white
Clouds and blue shadows floats supreme!
And all the nightingales along
The waters pulsate into song—
Their echoes melting, dream in dream.

Every Day.

A few hours' calm each day,
Careless of passing care ;
A prospect for the next as fair,
To keep our spirits bright and gay ;
For each some object to attain
Without exhaustion, without pain,
To others and ourselves, a gain ;
Something to love for ever nigh :
Someone beloved here, and on High :
Ideas we can turn to use,
Fancies and feelings to amuse,
Friends among books who cannot die—
The season's varying scenery—
Make life wherever it may tend
Still gracious, to its grateful end.

Two Kisses.

I.

Two kisses : one when day
Sheds its first rose on the bay,
And we kneel awhile to pray

That the Sovereign Soul of Being, Space and Light,
Will leave us Love to cheer
The life which we lead here,
And everything that's dear
To feeling, thought, and sight :
Scenes, books, music to enjoy
In all hours of sun and gloom ;
Health and vigour to employ
Our souls, that they may blow
Fully, richly, while below ;
And still brighter, broader glow
In the life beyond the tomb.

II.

Two kisses : one when fade
From the window, hill, and glade,
And the world in its own shade
Covered half, in solemn slumber speeds through
space,
For awhile, without the sun
Shining other lives upon ;—
Happy, if that we have done
Aught to benefit our race ;
Aught our spirits to improve
om the present, from the past,
nowledge and in love,

Whose divine sky has no west :—
Ere life's daily death in rest, .
A night kiss, sweet and blest,
And calm as 'twere our last.

Song.

LET us unite the three most bright
Spirits of Time in this Age of ours :
The Greek love of Beauty,
The Christian of Duty,
The modern of Progress developing powers ;
Blending in one Religion
All rays of Civilisation :
Love for all Life beneath the sun ;
Of holiness and art in alliance
With the potent truths of Science ;
Until, like forms of Deity,
Each spirit-centre labouring here
In prospect of eternity,
Becomes a bright and living sphere
Of Reason, Imagination ;
With sensibility for Good,
Guiding and governing every mood :

Inspiring Being with a faith
Not solely in this life we see,
But one prospecting beyond death,
For love of millions yet to be.

Come, let us make this World where we,
The larger brained humanity,
As yet the Godhead's highest forms,
Possessors of the land and sea,
A Home of present Deity
Celestially expand and shine :
A sphere whose sunny, starry hours,
Encircle self-evolved powers ;
And through all circumstantial storms,
Make ordered progress without pause ;
Advancing surer, freer, faster
Toward horizons nobler, vaster :
Still mounting, by discovery
Of Nature's inner, outward laws,
Up to the Supreme Soul divine :
Developing life's richest moods,
Intent upon perfection solely ;
Till, mastering doom,
Mankind become
Societies of human gods,
As happy as they're holy.

NOTES.

"The Spanish Diligence" refers to a catastrophe which occurred in 1850, at a point of the road between Barcelona and Orepeza.

¹ Mayoral, the conductor or driver of the vehicle.

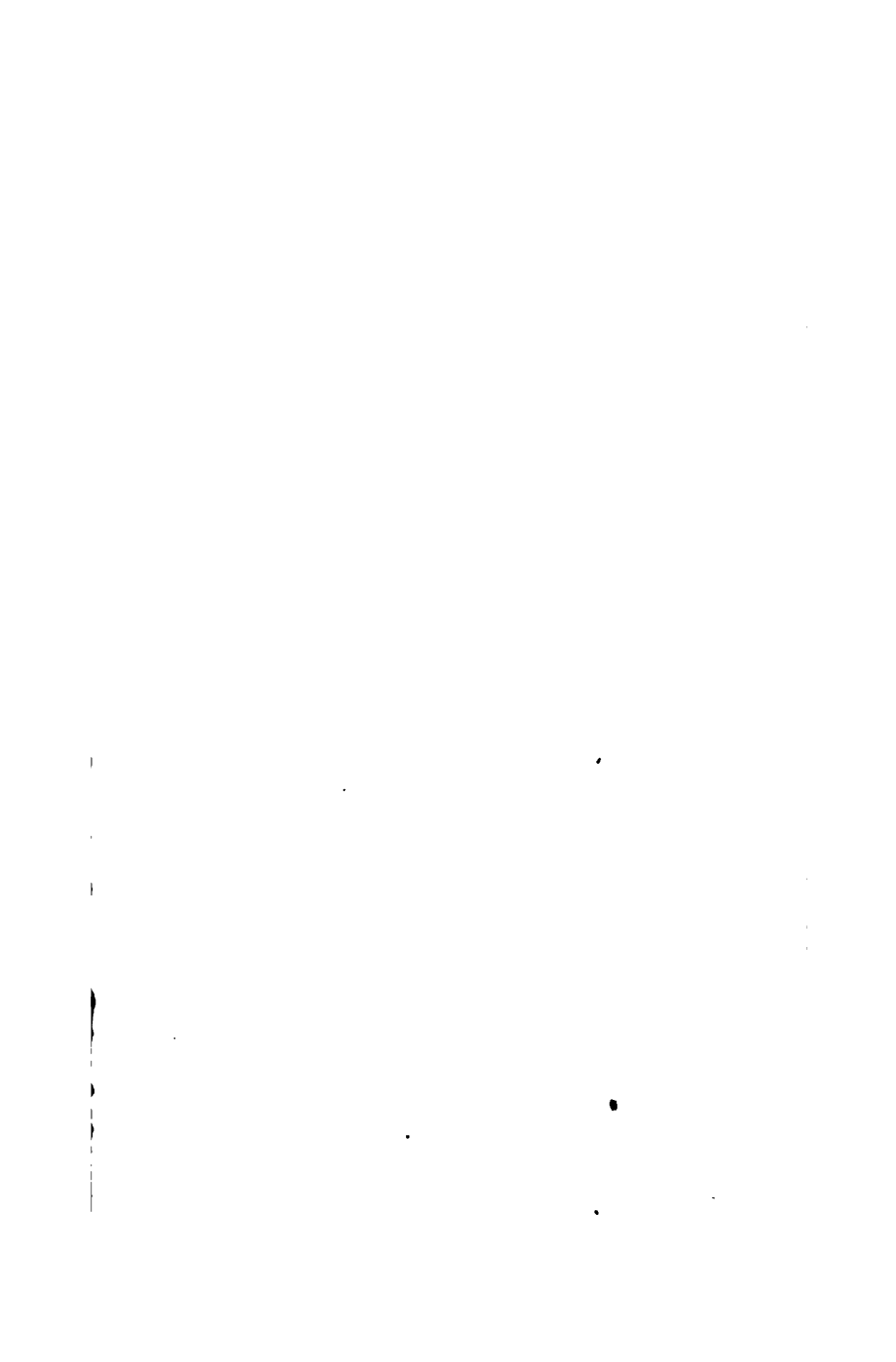
² Zagel, the cad. Capitano, Valeroso, names usually given to the horses. Yarre, steady; geelip, be firm. Posada, a roadside inn; Bota, the leather wine-bottle which travellers used to carry in Spain, and which Sancho Panza was so fond of kissing.

³ Eumorphia, a Greek word, meaning "Beauty."

⁴ The Suires were the Naiads, or Water-Spirits, of Celtic mythology.

Two short poems in this collection, p. 9 and p. 297 are reprinted here by the kind permission of Messrs. Cassel, Petter, and Galpin, London; in whose publications they originally appeared.

Two poems, "A Group in Queen Anne's time," and a "Song" have previously appeared in one of the author's volumes, entitled "Versicles." The remaining poems in this volume appear for the first time in a collective form.



Opinions of the Press ON MR. IRWIN'S POEMS.

"At length, by the grace of God, Ireland has a poet who may rival the
Thomas P. Irwin is the man. He is a true-

Page 1

Page 2

buoyant elasticity of its language, worthy of attention. 'The Forge' for spirit, ingenuity, and language of the sounds alluded to, and sustentation of interest, has seldom been equalled. 'The May-Day Revel' is a charming Irish fairy tale, that which depicts a May-Day Saturnalia among the woods of Rostrevor, where the faery king has granted a holiday to the birds, animals, and insects of that charming region. His 'Artist Songs' are full of cheerful thoughtfulness, intellectual aspiration, independence of feeling, and grateful pleasantries."—*Irish Quarterly Review*, on "Versicles," 1856.

"There is a debonair ease, an artistic *finesse*, an awfully cosmopolitanism in his verses, which surprised and refreshed cri-



Opinions of the Press

ON MR. IRWIN'S POEMS.

"At length, by the grace of God, Ireland has a poet who may rival the most gifted of other lands. Thomas C. Irwin is the man. He is a true-born poet, if ever there was one. He has shown in this, his first publication ('Versicles,' 1856) a mastery of his art which the best of his Irish predecessors do not possess. There is none among them like unto him, or second to him in that respect. There is a ripeness of knowledge, a mastery of the poet's art, an equanimity of temperament, and sense of power displayed throughout. . . . Mr. Irwin has extraordinary powers; he might be the Irish Shakespeare—the Shakespeare of every land where the language is English, and the blood partially Celtic."—*The Tribune*, 1856.

"There are in those pages, shape, and form, and a wide range of knowledge and thought. The rhythm is full sounded and self-restrained; the metres original and well chosen, harmonising with the subject as metre only does when selected by a poet; for he alone can make subject and metre accord as voice and instrument. Mr. Irwin exhibits strength and fertility, which augur well for future crops. The colours are tastefully applied. The 'Death House' displays power, with the tall elms knee deep in loam facing the dumb door and filling the windows with their gloom."—*Athenæum* on "Irwin's Versicles," Feb. 16th, 1866.

"It is a comfort to meet with an Irish poet who does not lift up that eternal wail as that of a race in exile, sorrowing over a splendid past and hopeless future; one who finds life liveable and poetry to be got out of it. If his countrymen were only wise enough to unite and live in the same spirit as he writes in, they would soon make a brighter outlook for the future. His themes are all nicely felt and appropriately expressed. Many of his poems are charming and manifest the true artistic touch."—*Athenæum* critique of Irwin's "Poems," 1867.

"His 'Versicles,' as they are modestly entitled, range over a wide field of imagination, thought, and emotion, making upon the whole a set of pictures, each remarkable for its own particular charm. The prevailing tone is one of sunny joyousness, of flowing sympathy with all fair and happy things. His Songs are thoroughly song-like, welling out of a warm heart, and teeming brain, while the descriptive pieces show great truth of picturesque detail, tinged with the feeling natural to the hour and occasion."—*Dublin University Magazine*, 1867.

"The poetry of Irwin is rich, soft, musical, and exuberant. His fancy teems with beauties, and we surmise we are not incorrect in attributing to him a mind of an elevated and capacious order. Luxuriant fancy, passionate aspirations are among his characteristics. His metres are distinguished by that easy grace and freedom which lend a charm to poetry above all other arts. Nothing can surpass the rich colouring of every passage in the 'Antique Dream.' From its inimitable harmony, and the buoyant elasticity of its rhythm, the 'Serenaders of Seville,' is well worthy of attention. 'The Forge' for spirit, ingenuity, imitation in language of the sounds alluded to, and sustentation of interest, has seldom been equalled. 'The May-Day Revel' is a charming Irish fairy tale, that which depicts a May-Day Saturnalia among the woods of Rostrevor, where the faery king has granted a holiday to the birds, animals, and insects of that charming region. His 'Artist Songs' are full of cheerful thoughtfulness, intellectual aspiration, independence of feeling, and graceful pleasantry."—*Irish Quarterly Review*, on "Versicles," 1856.

"There is a debonair ease, an artistic finesse, an awfully un-Celtic cosmopolitanism in his verses, which surprised and refreshed critics whose

staple subjects consisted of Young Ireland's battle songs and laments. None can perfectly appreciate the extraordinary power he manifests in the vivid description of Irish scenery who has not visited the scenes painted by Mr. Irwin. We should, however, do him great injustice if we raised the impression that picturesqueness is his chief characteristic. Together with the artistic qualities referred to, he has an imagination powerful as flexible, pathos and very exquisite humour. The artist songs have all the true Arab air. It is long since a volume was published in Ireland which we have such right to take a pride in. Not to speak of Irish writers, we maintain there is more true poetry in the 240 pages of 'Versicles' than for many years has seen the light in England."—*Nation*, 1856.

"His pictures and songs are as perfect as can be found in any literature."—*Nation*, on Irwin's "Poems," 1866.

"His poetry exhibits descriptive power of various kinds,—of natural beauties, of different countries and of different times, besides those which are highest—depictions of human character and passion."—*Tablet*.

"In his verses genius and discriminating taste are well allied."—*Newry Examiner*.

"The Celtic Union should have done nothing else than bring to public notice a real Irish genius, it would certainly have effected one national good. Mr. Irwin writes with the true feeling of a poet, and with a finely cultivated taste and discrimination. The 'Group in Queen Anne's Time' is an admirably finished sketch, while 'L'Angelo,' breathes the tenderest feeling of melancholy beauty. The other pieces are of more pretension and are not less effectively rendered."—*Cork Examiner*.

"Here is a volume of poetry, by an Irish writer, without war ballads, political songs, or lamentations—a collection of quaint, fanciful, and picturesque pieces."—*Wexford People*.

"There is an airy spontaneity, a vivid descriptive power, charming grace and colour, and delicate humour in these poems which stamp the writer as a true child of the Muses. Whether he gives us antique glimpses of the past, or treats of a sunny holiday in Italy or China, or depicts a revel with Shakspeare and his compeers; or communes with the angry soul of Swift, we are always surrounded with an atmosphere of poetry, fresh, natural, healthful as the breath of morning."—*The Advocate*, 1856.

"Whether discoursing of love and friendship, of life and death, all his pictures and images are borrowed from Nature. Mr. Irwin has abundance of fancy, great command of language, a pleasing and touching vein of sentiment, and a remarkable facility in the harmonious treatment of verse. His descriptions of natural scenery are frequently very fine."—*Daily Express*, 1866.

"Though he calls his poems 'National,' he recognises that higher nationality which is above all selfish claims of faction, distinctions of creed, or even divisions of race."—*Daily Express*, on Irwin's "Irish Poems and Legends," 1869.

"Mr. Irwin clothes his ideas in language always exact, and often rich, in a sort of simple beauty quite winning."—*Evening Packet*.

"Mr. Irwin is fluent, fanciful, melodious, and pleasant to read. . . . His Songs are sparkling and full of *verve*."—*New London Quarterly Review*.

"There is a classical grace both in the design and construction of his poems, an uniform sustentation; nor is it difficult to perceive that the author keenly appreciates the Grecian School, which has exercised an influence over the finest poetry of the present century. Without the abstracted idealism of Shelly, he possesses all that poet's incomparable power of producing well-nigh impossible effects by brilliancy of colouring."—*Irish Times*.

"His productions are remarkable for classic beauty, exquisite colouring, and good taste."—*Irishman*.





1



